Books Received

Contributors: Marti Rae Louw (M.R.L.) and Victor Margolin (V.M.)


A collection of studies illuminating artistic progress and its relationship to the past. Ackerman suggests that the authority of the past may be as much a stimulus as a restraint on artistic innovation. To ground his argument he focuses on the origins of innovation, imitation and their roles in invention and finally convention as a means of communication between an artist and the viewer in the development of visual forms of representation. These categories are explored with an emphasis on the progress in techniques of architectural representation.


The catalog of an exhibition featuring products designed and produced in Toledo. Essays by Dennis Doordan, Jeff Meikle, John Heskett, and others.


A narrowly focused study about the rise of artistic training and careers for women in the visual arts by examining the 150-year history of the Moore College of Art and Design in Philadelphia. Arranged chronologically, the chapters address evolving challenges women faced in gaining professional standing as teachers, artists and designers. This book gives definition to the often unrecognized role women played in shaping the aesthetic values of American consumer culture in the twentieth century.


An incisive examination of how technology and knowledge are becoming definable and tradable commodities. The authors analyze technology strategy and the economics underlying innovation. This work succeeds by offering a powerful set of concepts by which to understand markets for technology.


A richly illustrated survey of imagery covering America’s complex relationship with Communism and Soviet Russia in a variety of media. Includes timelines charting significant political and cultural events between 1848 to 2000, as well as commentary on the ways in which books, films, magazines, newspapers, comics and posters dealt with the propagandistic messages of the day.


Techniques for photographing architecture with black and white film. Filled with beautiful examples of architectural images, this book moves through location choices, composition, interiors, and details while looking at tone, texture and contrasts choices. Different printing and processing techniques are given with concise textual explanations of possible effects. Contributing photographers’ talk about the methods used for included example works.

A unique journey into Islamic culture and history while examining the transformative impact of paper on a society during the Middle Ages. Centuries before the Gutenberg press, Muslims carried papermaking technology from China across Central Asia to Europe and with them changed the shape of mathematics, music, art, architecture. This book is a fascinating view into an early communication technology that made writing portable and revolutionized information transfers between cultures. M.R.L.


A practical guide to the craft of information design, with particular attention paid to illustrating statistics. Includes an overview of modern diagram design and instruction on how to take advantage of available software to create a clear and engaging diagram. V.M.


Concise profiles of 35 inventors whose works have been chosen to exemplify the technological creativity of the United States over the last century. Subjects range from well known inventors like Thomas Edison and Steve Wozniak to lesser known pioneers such as Stephanie Kwolek, inventor of Kevlar and Wilson Greatbatch, inventor of the first cardiac pacemaker implant. For an overview of some of the greatest innovations in science and technology and the men and women behind them, this book provides a well-illustrated and accessible entrée to the subject. M.R.L.


A visually delightful presentation of experimental and technically groundbreaking designs in chairs, tables and lighting. The author organizes the chapters by material—tables are grouped into wood, metals, glass, plastic and other categories. These material considerations are reflected in the commentary on the design, craftsmanship and manufacturing technology. For each object, blueprint-like illustrations provide schematic information on dimensions, fasteners, casting and joints that will please those interested in the details of a design. M.R.L.


A sumptuously illustrated survey of tapestry production and its technical and design artistry in Renaissance Europe. This study focuses on the stylistic evolution of tapestry in the Netherlands and its influence on Italian and French weaving centers. The important place tapestry held in the ceremonial and daily life of wealthy patrons is woven into a compelling historical narrative. This book will make even the uninitiated appreciate these tremendous artistic creations. M.R.L.


A lyrical collection of images of South Africans by noted photographer Edward West. Throughout West uses shadowy figures as a metaphor to depict the slow emergence of blacks in a post-apartheid era. An interview with the photographer and essays by Athol Fugard and Wally Serote round out this visual ode to the humanity of South Africa’s shadowed classes. M.R.L.


A self-published collection of declarations and manifestos concerned with independence from the design firm Capsule. This artfully produced small hand book includes The Declaration of Independence, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Timothy Leary’s Declaration of Evolution and Walter Gropius’s Bauhaus Manifesto with a foreword by Minnesota Governor Jesse Ventura. The purpose of this panoply of loosely linked ideas is somewhat unclear—self promotion, public education or something else? M.R.L.

A city-by-city curatorial investigation of the avant-garde art movement in Central Europe. Filled with color reproductions, this book tracks the complex web of interactions among artists and intellectuals and the resulting influences that lead to Expressionism and Constructivism. The book was published to accompany an exhibit by the same name at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.


An exploration of industrial design’s relation to other disciplines, its role in the process of innovation, and in the larger field of product planning. The author calls for a broadened role of the industrial designer and for a new orientation in design education.


A detailed look at the reciprocal influences of fashion and culture through the history of the kimono. Part social history and part anthropological exploration of clothing as material culture, this book follows the kimono robe from its introduction from China to its rise as a national costume, a form of “geisha ware” and finally its gradual disappearance from the streets of modern Japan. For those interested in the aesthetic subtleties of how fashion and culture play out in color, pattern, fabrics, layers, lengths and drape, this book offers over 350 illustrations and engaging text that should appeal to both the lay person and academic alike.


An attractive instructional manual on how to take professional looking family portraits. Much of the advice is common sense or cliché, but if one is looking for lighting, color and composition techniques from taking family photos, from babies through grandparents, this book offers some helpful hints.


Exhibition catalog for the show entitled “Rubber Love: Language & Representations.” HIV/AIDS in South-East Asia “which surveys the graphic component of the public health, material culture surrounding HIV and AIDS,” particularly the “use of language and representations in the promotion of prevention campaigns.” (p. 4)


Exhibition catalog for the show curated by the editors (with Beverly Fielder) and including paintings by Jeri Drucker, photographs by William Yang, and graphics by the Australian Socio-Graphic AIDS Project and the South East Asian Socio-Graphic AIDS Project. With a bibliography of texts that deal with images of AIDS in art and design.


A treatise positing a philosophical basis for human-computer interaction. Drawing on the phenomenological traditions of Wittgenstein and Heidegger that emphasize the primacy of natural practice over abstract cognition in everyday activity, Dourish describes how tangible, social interactions lie at the core of embodied interaction. He suggests that the design of interactive computer systems in the future will need to adopt this reality.


Examples of digital design in print, poster and media advertising from around the world. This slick presentation of fourteen distinctive ad campaigns includes comments on the project concept and process by the creative directors. The book provides a quick reflection on trendy advertising and the talk behind it.

A rich, photojournalistic view of a pivotal decade and essays on the role and development of news photography. Culled from the New York Times Photo archives, affectionately known as the morgue, this book accompanies a recently opened travelling exhibition. The photographs are arranged thematically under headings “America in the World,” “Mechanization in Command,” “Fame and Infamy” and “American Ways of Life,” with captions for background. This book provides great examples of photojournalism, photography, and American culture in the 1950s. M.R.L.


A lavishly illustrated exploration of an aesthetic and cultural approach to appreciating traditional Japanese design. Each chapter presents craft objects that embody one of the five tastes—Artless Simplicity (Saboku), Zen Austerity (Wabi), Gorgeous Splendor (Karei) and Edo Chic (Iki) and Ancient Times (Kodai no Bi). The arrangement of these exquisite utilitarian objects by taste criteria reveals the subtle forces driving Japan’s unique design culture. M.R.L.


An impassioned entreaty calling for the inclusion of ecology as a standard requirement in landscape architecture and design education programs. In addition to arguing for the necessity of teaching ecological principles to future environmental designers, the authors provide clear examples of how to institute these changes. M.R.L.


A collection of essays reevaluating John Dewey’s pragmatist philosophy from a feminist perspective. Contributors find resonance with Dewey’s opposition to logical positivism which in turn supports attempts to find alternatives to male biases in Western philosophy. This book offers a fixed lens through which to look at the meaning of Dewey’s work. M.R.L.


A technical text addressing the cultural aspects of design as it relates to the problems posed by ergonomics. Addressing practitioners in the fields of industrial design, architecture, engineering, construction and even graphics, Flores incorporates social, psychological, atmospheric and physical concerns in her text. V.M.


A vocational guide aimed at illustrators and graphic designers intending to go freelance. Clearly written and full of basic information about starting and running an independent business, this book offers would-be freelancers a good reality check prior to venturing out on their own. The included sample forms, contracts and letters of assignment are useful, but a detailed discussion of the legal aspects and the protection these critical documents provide is somewhat lacking. M.R.L.


A market economy approach to measuring artists’ creative output. Galenson, through statistical analysis of 100 modern painters, has found a link between age and artistic creativity. He characterizes two styles of innovation. Experimental innovators, like Cézanne, who work by trial and error, arrive at their contributions gradually, often late in life. Conceptual innovators, like Picasso, make sudden breakthroughs, often at a young age, by formulating new ideas. This book takes a unique approach to understanding artistic creativity. M.R.L.

A set of 3D interactive character animation techniques for non-programmers. Given as 22 project based tutorials, this book allows animators to learn tools and develop the computer graphic skills necessary to build virtual environments and populate them with actors able to interact in the world. The included CD-ROM offers demos of popular modeling/animation programs; related tutorial files and on-line resources.

M.R.L.


Vocational guidance for design professionals and students. Written by a recruiter for marketing communications firms, Goldfarb provides practical tips on resumes, design portfolios and interviewing for job seekers in an age of media convergence. Industry experts contribute sections on hiring criteria, business structure and career strategies across different fields including print, advertising, industrial and interactive design. If you are thinking about changing jobs or starting a search, this guide could provide a needed boost.

M.R.L.


A technical manual for designers, architects and builders, as well as students of industrial design or anyone training for a career that incorporates some aspect of wood construction. Gomezjurado provides detailed instructions for tasks that range from cutting to preserving, and also addresses issues related to manufacturing with wood.

V.M.


A stylish presentation of so-called smart products that embrace technology and new materials. Grinyer selects twenty-four products to illustrate his notion of smart design. Some of the selections are familiar—Sony’s Aibo cyberpet and Apple’s iBook laptop—others are less celebrated but notable such as Boehringer Ingelheim’s HandiHaler drug dispenser for asthmatics. Short commentaries about the design process with production drawings make for pleasurable reading about new trends in product design.

M.R.L.


An authoritative second edition guide for creating and distributing QuickTime multimedia content. QuickTime has become a prevalent standard for digital media on the web. This guide covers “how-to” sections for integrating videos, recorded sounds, Flash animation, virtual reality, MIDI, still images, live streams, and games into a website.

M.R.L.


A record of technological innovations and progress in the field, with objects arranged chronologically according to material (metal, wood, ceramic, glass). Supporting text accompanies photos and illustrations of the objects, and includes discussions of historical context, details about the manufacturing process and an evaluation of the design. With a glossary, lists of manufacturers, museums, bibliography and index.

V.M.


Short essays by a well-known graphic designer on a variety of topics that range from electronic typography and design education to the complexities of designing for new media.

V.M.

A personal collection of design related essays by a noted art director and pop cultural aficionado. The anthology explores the intersection between graphic design and popular culture and presents examples of their reciprocal influences on visual media over the last forty years. M.R.L.


A collection of essays from 30 educators and practitioners that includes discussions about the field of illustration and the role of the illustrator, as well as essays, interviews and course syllabi from professionals who describe the transition from gathering knowledge to forming a career. V.M.


New, expanded edition of the 1988 survey of graphic design styles and trends ranging from the industrial era to the present. Lavishly illustrated, with new material on the digital era, including sections on deconstruction, Émigré, fontism, controlled chaos, rave, kinetics and new simplicity. M.R.L.


A sourcebook of rare typefaces, ornaments, letterheads, and trademarks from Europe and the United States, dating from 1900 to 1940, and reprinted for the first time since the 1940s. The authors arrange the specimens according to “inherent visual relationships” that they see between them. V.M.


An anthology of more than fifty texts on the history, aesthetics and practice of typography and type design, including essays by practitioners and arguments from both traditional and innovative viewpoints. Texts organized into the following categories: aesthetics, criticism, anatomy, movement, practice and reflections. V.M.


A survey of experimental (and, often, reactionary) type design that challenges traditional forms and standards, with special attention to the following categories: vernacular, hand-drawn, digitally driven and humorous. Attention is given to the varied sources for these styles and problems such as the tension between readability and artistic expression are explored. V.M.


A comprehensive study of Breuer’s architectural work. This weighty tome utilizes extensive archival materials, plans, sketches and photographs to document his work and tell the story of an architectural career that was memorable for much more than tubular steel chairs. M.R.L.


An exploration of the internet’s implications for society and its orientation in the world is affected by new technologies. Disembodied experiences of time and place create new conceptions of reality that will only continue to expand as virtual reality engines improve. Ihde provides a philosophical basis on which to consider the nature of the body and its perceived reality in cyberspace. M.R.L.


A research publication intended for a professional audience, this book looks at the ways in which companies use industrial design as part of a large effort to understand its position in the current manufacturing economy. An effort is also made to show how companies might make better use of design. V.M.


An exploration of the internet’s implications for society on economic, political, technological and artistic levels in the form of collected letters, essays, dramas and meditations on the phenomenon. V.M.

A record of the visual style of American rave culture, including 350 art works, names of previously unknown designers and dates of events. New York Times music critic Neil Strauss’s introduction provides a brief history of the culture that produces these images, and the authors arrange the works into a chronology of styles and forms. V.M.


A theoretical overview of contemporary design practice in both business and professional contexts with special attention paid to the relationship between design and advertising. V.M.


Case studies of successful city planning projects to combat sprawl. The authors espouse a “smart growth” approach that emphasizes town-centered, transit and pedestrian oriented development, which mixes residential, commercial, and retail projects. This upbeat book showcases positive examples of growth in urban, suburban, and exurban settings. M.R.L.


Stunning visual depictions of the often excessive extremes fashion has manipulated in pursuit of beauty across time and cultures. Each chapter covers a part of the female anatomy, the neck and shoulders, chest, waist, hips and feet. Full color photographs show striking examples of clothes and accessories which have been designed to emphasize particular, often unnatural, conceptions of beauty. This catalogue was published to go with an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute. M.R.L.


A collection of essays on theories of space, urban planning and research, and observations of community life in Hong Kong, with particular attention to the methodological approaches of Henri Lefebvre and Le Corbusier, and substantial use of the Hong Kong built environment as a case study. V.M.


A lively but serious attempt to define the nature of Cyberculture. The Council of Europe originally commissioned this book as a report on the state of cyberspace. Divided into three sections Definitions, Theoretical Issues, and Problems, the author seeks to define his terms and the technological infrastructure of cyberspace in the first part, and then addresses the emerging directions of digital culture in music, art, knowledge and society. The last section of the book counters the common dystopian critiques of cyberculture. For those wanting an optimistic overview of the distinguishing features of digital culture, this book offers a great many insights in an easy-to-read manner. V.M.


Part of the “Sights of Design” series, which takes a critical look at design culture. A collection of essays that deal with the shaping of visual culture, the way in which design contributes to cultural identity and the notion that we must rethink “our relationship with design technology to create a habitable visual world.” (p. 15). V.M.

A look at the visual face of “Fifties modern” with an explanation of its stylistic development and the optimistic consumer culture that lay behind its objects. An analysis of the interaction between art, design, style and the forward-looking public for which they existed. With images of architecture, industrial design and furniture. V.M.


A retrospective on the life and masterworks of the influential Brazilian landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx. This book features 26 of Burle Marx’s landscape projects from the memorable Copacabana Promenade to the public spaces and gardens of Brasilia and his many private commissions. The photographs reflect his genius—to create gardens that appear as paintings made with plants and which harmonize nature with architecture. M.R.L.


The daunting title belies a fascinating examination of the shifting cultural roles of art and religion through time. Nelson traces these role reversals by surveying the history of human simulacra (puppets, dolls, mannequins, robots and cyborgs) as players and transcendentals objects. This quirky slice through Western history provides a rationale for the rise of a mainstream secular culture that displaces graven images and religious impulses with puppetry, magic, science fiction and horror films. M.R.L.


A comprehensive, well illustrated textbook approach to interior design. Students will appreciate the broad survey of essential concepts and principles underlying residential and non-residential interior design. The text is supported by abundant visual examples that help clarify the topics under discussion. While the book lacks in depth, it achieves in breadth as an overview of interior design practices. M.R.L.


Examples of experimental layouts in a range of international graphic design projects. With ample illustration, the text attempts to provide a theoretical framework for innovation in the art of layout. Interviews with the designers offer insights into the process and concepts behind the work. Students and practitioners of graphic design will find this a useful resource for ideas and inspiration. M.R.L.


A reinterpretation of Dresser’s work which asserts his centrality to the history of design. The volume also includes documents by Henry Cole, Owen Jones, Gottfried Semper, Richard Redgrave, and Dresser himself. V.M.


Over 250 full color photographs and related text capture the range and beauty of organic architecture—a movement that is both an ethos and a style. The first part of the book is organized around eight slightly vague themes which provide an overview of organic architecture, its roots, concepts and fascination with the geometry of natural forms. The second part includes contributions from 30 renowned architects and designers in the ecological building movement who write about their personal approaches to architecture. This book offers designers, architects and nature-lovers clear examples of buildings that draw on nature for inspiration and revel in the beauty of curved forms. M.R.L.

A scholarly assessment of Candace Wheeler’s contributions to both textile and interior design and her attempt to professionalize women’s work in the design field. Divided into sections, the first part chronicles the impressive career of a young woman as she rises from a student of textile arts into partnership with Tiffany as an interior designer and textile specialist and finally forms her own woman-owned and run textile firm. The second section provides a richly illustrated catalogue of Wheeler and her associates’ designs for textiles, wallpapers and interior furnishings with detailed descriptions. For a revealing social history and a view of American taste during the latter part of the nineteenth century, this book will not disappoint. M.R.L.


A visual history of nineteenth century domestic interiors in New Zealand. Contemporary photographs, drawings and paintings with accompanying text offer readers insights into the housing and material circumstances of New Zealanders from traditional Maori whare, missionary homes, to suburban villas and bungalows. This study provides an interesting historical snapshot into the domestic life of both colonials and indigenous peoples. M.R.L.


An engaging cultural history tracing the emergence of a professional identity for women artists. Looking at the diverse careers of pre-1930 female artists for evidence, Prieto follows the professional trajectories of well-known artists such as Mary Cassatt and Georgia O’Keefe as well as those of lesser known artists and women of color. These stories reveal the prospects and constraints women faced in gaining ungendered recognition and professional acceptance for their work. M.R.L.


A compilation of personal manifestos about architecture selected by members of the Chicago Architectural Club. After an eleven-year hiatus, this edition marks the reinstatement of the journal with contributions from practicing architects and club members. The essays reflect on the forces that shaped yesterday’s architecture and seek to define those issues central to architecture today. M.R.L.


A densely written critique of the Fascist aesthetic discourse that has emerged in postwar film, literature, and art. Ravetto identifies contemporary works that have co-opted Nazi and other Fascist symbols and imagery and in the interpretation reinvigorate and generalize the aesthetics of fascism. She provides counterexamples of filmmakers whose representations provide more subtle reflections on “The Final Solution” and a Fascist past. This opinionated work challenges readers to think about the role of aesthetics in the politics of memory. M.R.L.


Considers the question of how media involve the senses. Includes a study of multisensoriality and deals with the question of synaesthesia in language as well as artifacts. V.M.


A comprehensive introduction to the Final Cut Pro editing system. From desktop studio set-up, to image editing, to composting special effects and outputting the video, this book covers all the necessary steps required to edit film and video projects. Ample screen shots help users digest the written information. Affordable production technologies and editing systems like this make professional filmmaking possible for all. M.R.L.

A tribute to the lifework of a master American architect, Louis Kahn. Architectural historian Rykwert gives a fresh perspective on Kahn’s monumental achievements with large full color photographs, archival sketches and plans from 15 major projects. Architectural lovers and fans of Kahn’s work will appreciate this lavishly produced volume. M.R.L.


An introduction to the past 25 years of “fringe publishing culture” from the hippie-era underground press to Internet versions. With essays by practitioners and critics, a timeline of English, American and Canadian works and events, and extensive critical commentary on the reprinted page and cover illustrations. V.M.


A sweeping look at the social, civic, economic and moral impact of shopping. Part history and part cultural study, this book traces the links shopping has to community, civility, public space. In the wastelands of the large, featureless superstores of today, Satterthwaite suggests these links have been torn. This is a compelling read for anyone curious about the American obsession with shopping. M.R.L.


The revised second edition to Sebeok’s seminal text on the semiotics of signs. Written in an accessible textbook fashion, this book lays out in clear terms the notion of signs and symbols, their study, and an exploration of six sign categories. The newly added glossary is a helpful feature for students and individuals new to the sometimes obtuse subject of semiotics and complex sign systems. M.R.L.


Synoptic views of world history highlighting transformative episodes of cultural contact. Beginning with the rise of civilization, this book traces the impact of major cultural encounters through to the present day. Fourteen case studies illuminate the historical consequences of cultural contacts that range in outcome from the spread of religion and science, to population diasporas and forced migrations, and in the modern age to the rise of colonialism and nationalism. Stern concludes with the current diffusion of consumer culture through sports, movies and fast food chains. M.R.L.


A richly illustrated look at the history and myths surrounding the corset. This book traces the rise of the corset from its first appearance on women in Spain and Italy during the 16th century to its popularization and widespread acceptance during the Victorian period. Steele delves into fetishistic “tight-lacing” practices and the erotic interest in corsets that have captured the imagination of artists and photographers well into our time. The history of the corset reveals a complicated and shifting set of meanings with regards to feminine beauty and sexuality. For those interested in a balanced look at how fashion and images of the female body have changed over time, this book contains a wealth of provocative material. M.R.L.


A collection of essays that explore the complex relationships between graphic design, reading and the words themselves, and questions the limits of these relationships. V.M.


The catalogue of an exhibition at the Art Institute of Chicago. Includes essays on new train stations, current and future passenger trains, and the future of train travel in the United States. Amply illustrated with color photographs of new trains and stations as well as models of projects for the future. V.M.
The latest book by the widely respected American art historian James S. Ackerman brings together a collection of recent essays spanning a diverse array of subjects and focusing primarily on Ackerman’s principal interest: the Italian Renaissance. Following on from his 1991 compilation, Distance Points: Essays in Theory and Renaissance Art and Architecture (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991), Ackerman reveals in the preface that the focus of these latest essays is to re-examine hi