

### Readings in Art and Design Education,

Edited by David Warren Piper, London;  
Davis-Poynter

- |   |                         |       |                            |
|---|-------------------------|-------|----------------------------|
| 1 | <i>After Hornsey</i>    | £4.00 | 150 pages                  |
| 2 | <i>After Coldstream</i> | £4.00 | 164 pages<br>(illustrated) |

In 1971 two symposia were held at the ICA. David Warren Piper has arranged papers loosely based on these into two books, 1 *After Hornsey*, 2 *After Coldstream* and as such they provide a useful addition to the literature of Art and Design.

The two books are interdependent, their production as a part-work is surprising. They would have been more useful as one volume; perhaps this could have reduced the total price, but no doubt the economics of book production have their own rules. The design process does not seem to have influenced the format or design of the book although this forms a major theme of the content.

David Warren Piper has provided a preface and contributed a paper to each book as well as co-operating on a statistical section with Clare Francis. Although primary, secondary and adult education are included, the main discussion centres around the DipAD, and within this area the gentleman and players argument on liberal versus vocational, and Art versus Design is prominent.

In most discussions on art and design, assumptions and half truths are to the forefront. Many of these papers make commendable attempts to avoid this, but the familiar note is first struck by the dust jacket where it states 'Some of the leading art colleges have now joined the new polytechnics and they have a tradition of teaching courses packed with relevant and practical facts'. The fact is that a number of polytechnics were formed by the joining together of art colleges with colleges of technology, many of the colleges of technology had very large humanities and social

science departments and where these formed, with art and design, part of a polytechnic, the disciplines concerned primarily with practical facts were often in the minority. This may seem a pedantic point, but it is symptomatic of the use of language when applied to art and design. There is an inherent difficulty for a system intended primarily to develop the visual/manual faculties when it has to face problems which are solved in society by written statements, and verbal communication. No doubt Pevsner in his plea for vigorous approach to art history had this in mind. Because of this impediment many of the most influential people in art and design education come from other fields — the social sciences, architecture, art history, etc. Examples of this problem of literacy are scattered through the various documents which have established the present system of art and design education. They contain passages which are narrow and inflexible alongside passages that are mere verbiage or susceptible to many contradictory interpretations. They purport to be liberal documents but are often narrow and doctrinaire.

This problem is of course compounded by the long isolated development of art education in this country.

Warren Piper in his introduction remarks 'Conversely the champions of art schools often show an appalling ignorance of the rest of the education system'.

Digby Jacks also expresses concern at this isolation.

Art education is clearly, whether we like it or not, becoming more closely a part of the rest of the education system and an appreciation of the real advantages and disadvantages of this system are important.

An outsider reading these pages might well conclude that art and design education is in a terrible mess, partly because it fails to define terms, and consequently conducts all its debates at cross purposes.

One part of Tom Warren's excellent paper is helpful in attempting to define that jack of all trades word 'creativity', whilst Edward de Bono prefers to side step; but in the meantime creativity, Art and Fine Art and any other terms continue to be used to mean one thousand and one beautiful things. There is continual confusion between the 'training of Artists' and 'Art Education' some saying that training to be an artist is an education and that therefore Art Education is simply training the Artist. The Artist is then defined as a creative person!

The problem of terminology reinforces not only the isolation of Art Education, but the isolation of the various sectors within it, between secondary, further and post-graduate courses and between the courses in individual establishments.

But to turn to the importance of the implications of structure to which these books refer. Several contributors make suggestions, these range from the silly, to the conventional and already well known. Most seem anxious to impose further laws. What is needed is the flexibility to develop courses and to conduct research far more broadly than is at present possible. The need for academic research in Art and Design is so clear that one almost wonders whether there is some plot to keep the whole subject shrouded in mystery. Examples of the range of courses I mean are:

Visual Art courses which contain within them the teacher training element, and are specifically intended for those who intend to enter education, yet providing the same level of artistic achievement expected on a Dip AD Course.

Courses containing a much higher percentage of academic study than the present ambiguous complementary studies including the History of Art.

Part-time as well as full-time courses.

Design theory, Art theory courses.

Design methodology courses.

Courses concerned with observation.

Courses concerned with the visual environment.

Courses concerned with all the Arts, as the late Randall Lines has suggested, bringing together, 'craft, drama, ballet, music, architecture and scenery.'

The sameness of so many existing courses is worrying and brings us back to fundamental arguments: is it better to provide a course which the students must follow or fail, but from which if they pass, here gain a knowledge of something in depth? Or to provide freedom for three years in which some students will learn and others will not? No doubt most students would say they would prefer the latter; whether they would, given the choice, apply for them is a different matter. Both could be provided but I don't think either are. If they are, then prospectuses are very misleading. To identify some of the issues raised in these books as needing urgent attention, is frightening, because it seems to indicate that we do almost nothing well. The areas of concern are:

- 1 The education of designers;
- 2 the education of artists;
- 3 adult education;
- 4 the education of teachers for secondary education;
- 5 the education of teachers for further and higher education;
- 6 the education of craftsmen;
- 7 the provision of liberal educational courses in the visual arts;
- 8 the passing on of a cultural tradition;
- 9 research and academic study;
- 10 knowledge;
- 11 art education;
- 12 the avoidance of trendiness, etc.

*After Hornsey and After Coldstream* provide the stimulus for debate, some evidence which is useful and some points for the

future. I hope they will be read and considered and not merely used as ammunition to bolster existing entrenched opinions. David Warren Piper is to be congratulated on the breadth and balance, which the books as a totality present.

RJ Plummer

### **Woodcarving, Walter Sack**

*London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, £2.25*

This is a book that deals mainly with techniques in woodcarving. The samples of work illustrated are chosen to explain points of techniques and as a result tend to be rather mechanical and banal.

It is a valuable book for anyone wanting to learn techniques but a poor guide to anyone looking for suggestions as to what to make. The explanatory drawings are particularly helpful and clear. Much good advice is given on the choice, care and maintenance of equipment. Altogether it can be recommended as a useful addition to a workshop library.

B T Aylward

### **Museums and Galleries Molly Harrison**

Local Search Series, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, £1.60

Molly Harrison, the author of the current volume and the editor of the series, is well known for her work in promoting the educational use of museums. Under her guidance the Geffrye Museum became alive with children, many of them engaged in individual exploration in their own time. Generations of students learnt from their visits much about the subtlety of organising children's activity by suggestion rather than direction.

Mrs Harrison here introduces children to the variety of museums, private and public, indoor and outdoor. She encourages them to look critically at arrangements and displays and she advises on the use of materials. She raises for discussion such issues as the right of private owners to dispose of their masterpieces abroad, and she stimulates pupils to think about the whole question of public taste.

Intended to assist children in their CSE projects, Museums and Galleries, is attractively presented and includes about fifty illustrations of high quality. It is simply written and could in fact be used over a wide age-range and particularly in the middle school. It is a pleasure to be able to recommend wholeheartedly a book which is so well designed to rouse children to take an active interest in their heritage and environment.

Marjorie Cruickshank

### **Parent-Teacher Partnership, Graham Bond**

*London: Evans Bros. £1.65*

This is a most welcome addition to the slowly lengthening list of books on this important subject.

Mr Bond speaks from his own personal experience, having been a headmaster of five schools. He backs up his convictions of just how vital are the close links between home and school with many theoretical quotations and case studies. Where parents from any social stratum are encouraged to take a real interest in their child's school, the academic attainment of their offspring increases. He proves beyond doubt that where school becomes a shared experience, there are not only benefits to the child, but also to the parent, the teacher, the school and the local community.

He sets out most clearly how any school, in any type of neighbourhood, can achieve good home/school co-operation — how parents can persuade a reluctant head teacher to welcome them in, and equally well, how teachers can tempt recalcitrant parents to come into school.

Mr Bond spends some time on the subject of the importance of communication, formal and informal conferences and interviews between teachers and parents and emphasises that teachers should have training in the techniques needed to make these things a success. He sets out the various organizations which can assist both home and school with advice and gives details of helpful literature. There is even a most useful 'Home & School' reading list for anyone who has a real interest in this subject at heart, and this, to my mind, must include every teacher and every parent with a child of school age.

Esmée M Epton

### **Practical Woodcarving and Gilding,**

William Wheeler and Charles H  
Hayward

*London: Evans Bros, £2.50*

This revised issue of a standard work is welcome. It is, of course, written by skilled craftsmen for craftsmen. It is frankly traditional and contains a fund of information about a traditional craft. At a time when it is becoming increasingly difficult to find skilled craftsmen it is good to see details of their skill preserved.

Of course times are different; needs are different and not many may want to produce a hand carved moulding or a piecrust table top. Yet the care, skill and interest that developed these and other embellishments was a sign of enjoyment and expansiveness that might some day be called on to relieve otherwise dull, mechanical, merely profitable items of commerce. We should thank the authors for showing that there can be

fun as well as profit in production. Certainly anyone wishing to know how some of the lovely traditional carving was done could not do better than turn to this book.

B T Aylward

### **Making Old Testament Toys, Margaret Hutchings**

*London: Mills & Boon, £1.50*

### **Models in Action, Harry Sutton**

*London: Evans, £1.75*

### **Model Making in Schools, Brenda Jackson**

*London: Batsford, £2*

Whilst the most optimistic curriculum developer might hesitate to integrate craft and religion, Margaret Hutchings does so with rare perception and wry humour. *Making Old Testament Toys* is a book to delight primary and middle school teachers, presenting a host of attractive toys and playthings inspired by the first part of the world's best seller.

Quite properly it begins with an amusing flannelgraph version of the Creation, which can be assembled and reassembled with endless variation, and concludes with Moses in the bulrushes. Between the two, quaint matchbox animals stand cheek by jowl with a finger puppet Noah family, a lazy-tong Jacob's ladder (with 'the angels of God ascending and descending on it') and a galaxy of favourite characters accompanied by apt quotations, material lists, clear instructions and where appropriate, full-size patterns.

This is not a book to copy slavishly but one to inspire, and one which invites children to enjoy, like countless generations before them, the vivid drama of the Old Testament. This is a book, too, printed with

imagination, colourful typography and attractive binding, all supporting a worthy content.

In contrast to such simple charm and inspiration, Harry Sutton in *Models in Action* offers large, ingenious and attractive working models, which are unquestionably the products of a creative mind. The range of ten projects includes a fishing village with rising and falling tide, a Norman castle with secretly operated portcullis and drawbridge, a motor car gearbox which adds a new dimension to the ubiquitous corrugated cardboard, a fairground with simultaneously working big wheel, chair-o-plane and switchback, and a tropical island with growing trees and shrubs.

Instructions are (alas?) fully detailed and illustrated by myriad photographs, but sadly one doubts whether children of an age to which the models might appeal would have the patience, precision or persistence to see them through to a successful conclusion. Air driven turbines, for example, to raise a drawbridge and portcullis, may prove frustratingly impracticable to impatient and not over-dexterous young fingers. Those who remember icing a cake for the first time may well sympathise with young hands trying to spread modelling clay over an island built with wet cotton wool and cocktail sticks.

Nevertheless, those who are able to replicate these cleverly contrived miniatures may recapture for themselves or younger friends some of the wonder of the old penny-in-the-slot working models on the seaside pier of a bygone age. Harry Sutton's models may prove rather more ephemeral than those masterpieces of yesteryear in their all-enveloping plate glass and cast iron cases, but perhaps far more satisfying in the making and, hopefully, in their working.

In further contrast to both the above, Brenda Jackson's *Model Making in Schools* offers splendid starting points for the exploration of three-dimensional work in classroom and workshop. The projects are deli-

berately open-ended and their scope is wide and realistic. Beginning with opportunities for transition from two- to three-dimensional work, they include the use of paper and card, hard, soft and junk materials, architectural model making, and the application of scientific principles calculated to improve investigational and inventive skills. It is a great pity that the title of the book does it less than justice, for it is concerned with far more than mere model making, and is likely to inspire teacher and pupil. This volume is well worth a place on the craft room bookshelf.

Leslie Deem

### **Creative Plastics Techniques, Claude Smale**

*London: Van Nostrand Reinhold, £2.75*

This book is full of technical advice on the way various plastics can be worked. Correct procedures and safety precautions are clearly set out. There are useful suggestions for simply made equipment.

Pictures of commercial products show very well how the characteristics of various plastics can be exploited to produce an excellent article. It is a pity that the ones illustrated that are individually made are often so revolting. It is difficult to decide whether this is due to the nature of plastics or to the facility with which they can be worked. Certainly this book gives no indication of the possibility of them responding to individual sensitivity in the way that natural materials can. But this is probably not the writer's intention.

The book will certainly help the reader to learn how best to work plastic materials. No one — the author included — will insist on anyone using these techniques to achieve the sort of results illustrated.

B T Aylward

**Clay Modelling, Lothar Kampmann***London: Batsford, £1.50***Clay, Rolf Hartung***London: Batsford, £1.50*

Originally written in German, printed in Italy and now translated into a language resembling English for the Batsford Craft series, these two books are not an altogether reassuring example of post-EEC-entry publishing.

Lothar Kampmann's title is somewhat misleading as he covers papier mâché, wax, plaster, plasticine and other artificial modelling materials as well as clay. His very first sentence is not untypical of what is to follow: 'In the earliest records of mankind, in which modern man seeks solutions to the puzzles of the past, the theme is often of clay, earth and mud, materials which can be kneaded and which were the very first to be formed and shaped by primitive man.' (*themes* ? and doesn't the archaeological evidence suggest that man worked flint, bone and wood long before he discovered the useful properties of clay?) The text is too brief to be very informative or to avoid confusing the inexperienced primary school teacher or student for whom it is presumably intended: the words 'slip' and 'engobe' are used indiscriminately without explanation and illustrations of German Kilns and kiln furniture are unlikely to be helpful. It is also marred by misprints (pp 24 and 29) and by mistakes: for instance, though all temperatures are given in degrees F as well as C, (an unnecessary concession to quaint English custom), porcelain clays are said to require 1800°C in the firing whereas porcelain is fired at between 1350°C and 1450°C and would melt before reaching 1800! However, children are unlikely to make porcelain, and the text is very obviously of secondary importance to the 130 illustrations, mainly colour photographs, of

fairly typical childrens work. From these a teacher with flagging inspiration might pick up an idea or two for the craft class.

Rolf Hartung's book, though similar in format, might perform a different and more important function. The brief text, though free of mistakes, is again dispensable: describing verbally manual skills such as throwing and modelling is of doubtful usefulness at the best of times and here it is combined with lyrical passages having the solemn oddity of a BBC announcer paraphrasing German *lieder*: 'Closing the kiln door and turning on the heat are always events. It will now be revealed whether we were careful and whether we are in luck. We are full of joy and doubt.' (p 10) The author does achieve some eloquence in the sequence of 100 monochrome illustrations which show well how pleasing and useful shapes can be developed by manipulating a hand-held ball of clay or by cutting up and reassembling a simple cube. The photographs are not of children's work but they tacitly suggest those coherent principles, lacking in the other book, by which children can be guided to produce good work; respect for the nature of materials, the fitting of form to function, the textural possibilities of clay and glazes and the virtue of simple, strong shapes and shape-related decoration.

Michael Paffard

**Woodware, Ake Nilsson***London: Mills and Boon, £1.50*

With such a name, Ake Nilsson could scarcely be other than Swedish, and this little book has been ably translated by D Cook-Radmore and appears to have lost nothing in the process. Scandinavian treen has a rare charm and simplicity which effectively masks superb skill and exquisite design. Here, however, is a splendid invitation to the most diffident woodworker and to the most skilled to produce items of

great beauty and utility. The use of often exotic timber from fruit and ornamental trees is encouraged and there is first-class advice on obtaining, drying and preparing it. In addition, brief but informative chapters are included on laminating, simple dowelling, gluing and finishing. The main part is devoted to 81 projects, well photographed with principal dimensions and simple pointers to possible construction. By no means an original formula, but one which succeeds in this volume, making it a worthwhile sourcebook of satisfying ideas.

Leslie Deem

### **The Stanley Book of Sculpture with Surform Tools, John Matthews**

*London: Edward Arnold, £1.20*

The main emphasis of this book is on the use of Surform Tools. To these ends the work illustrated amply justifies the means, and shows a variety of objects including masks, animals, pendants, abstracts, toys and kitchen utensils.

The presentation of the book is attractive and sets out with abundant clarity what the author is intending to communicate to his readers. Considerable attention is given to a step-by-step description of the processes involved; full-size patterns and measurements in both metric and imperial units are also included. Indeed, little is left to chance and it is suggested in the preface that when readers have gained expertise, it is hoped that they will branch out with their own designs. Clearly, the author has considerable faith that some of his readers may have the necessary enterprise and imagination to step beyond a blue-print initiation to a subject.

The nature of its publication indicates a varied readership as its target, this could include schools. It is hoped, therefore, that in the school workshop the advocated process of branching out with own designs takes early precedence over the temptation to

copy from the wide range of artefacts shown in this 95-page publication. Needless to say, work of this nature can at its very best be expressive if motivated by a skilled and cautious teacher, who realises that it is one of the many opportunities in the total area of design and craft experience of pupils' education.

The specimens so clearly illustrated in the book suggest many hours of laborious cleaning up after the surform work. It may be sensible to limit the size of school work to small tactile experiments in the early stages of a pupil's design experience; the toll on time, glasspaper and the pupils initial enthusiasm would be considerably reduced.

Francis Zanker

### **Teaching Art Basics, Roy Sparkes**

*London: B. T. Batsford,*

*New York: Watson-Guipill Publications, £1.90*

This book is rather superficial in content and tends to treat the study of the elements of art — Line, Shape, Colour, Tone, Texture, Form, Movement and Pattern — in a somewhat cursory manner that in no way enhances Maurice de Saumarez's earlier and very successful exploitations. It seems to me that the author is attempting to translate the art college 'Foundation Course' approach to the teaching of children, although he must be credited with enough expertise to realise that a slightly different slant is needed.

The text is simple, perhaps too much so, and this is a pity for it is not up to the standard required of a book that should be on the periphery of educational scholarship. It is inclined to be a sad mixture of tips for teachers and art philosophy that, for me, fails to satisfy.

Nevertheless, young teachers and student teachers should find the book useful as an aid to their studies of Art Education. The basic ideas discussed should, if considered

with discretion and worked through with materials in the studios, aid them to a more pertinent understanding of simple developments and processes that will give them confidence in the classroom.

Batsfords have maintained their usual high standards of presentation and have juxtaposed text and good illustrative material in a very happy union. The book is attractive, easy to handle, and it should have a ready market in schools and colleges. It might even lead to in-depth study of proved authorities such as Read, Langer, Arnheim and others who can, and do, stimulate a real study of the subject.

John Lancaster

### **Man-Made, Jack Bainbridge**

*London: Evans Bros, £1.20*

This book, in the Evans Integrated Thames series, aims to encourage children to think, question, and investigate. It is a book for the school library or resource centre, to which pupils can be directed both for information and for stimulating reading that should inspire further investigation — of surroundings, materials, and other books. The author himself chooses an imaginative interpretation of his title — man-made things here include (as well as the expected paper, pesticides, and plastics) smells, waste, colour, elements, diamonds, cosmetics, etc., etc. He is particularly strong on smells, from the stench of Bethnal Green in 1838 to the fruity aromas of jam and cheeses, and on waste disposal and its social problems.

An imaginative chapter on paper includes an authoritative presentation of the international A-series and the suggestion of an investigation to find the best newspaper for keeping our fish and chips warm. The plastics chapter brings us round again to litter and waste disposal, as well as the

length of track on an LP record, whilst under adhesives are hints for simple experiments to test milk glue and egg cement, followed by a competition to name the most successful product of a class project.

An emergency telegram opens the chapter on pesticides — how can we help the Scouts whose camp is being spoiled by flies and wasps? Reason prevails and we agree to recommend the traditional fly-paper and jam-jar traps that don't poison the food-chains of other wild life.

The reviewer's son, aged 10, was particularly stimulated by the scope for creative thinking and writing that the book offers: prepared by a tense account of the discovery of artificial element 101, we are shown a photograph of a nuclear-powered submarine: 'One day you get back to base and there is nobody there . . . go on.'

This is an imaginative book — imaginatively compiled and written, and designed to stimulate children around the 9-13 age range to think constructively about man-made things and their consequences. It is, in fact, an excellent practical introduction to the meaning of Technology in its social context — the sort of book our children should be reading now to help in developing informed and responsible attitudes both to Technology and to Misapplied Science.

M Sayer

### **GODDARD 513**

The safe Sawing Jig and Dual Purpose Bench for School Craftwork is obtainable from A.R. Goddard Ltd, Victoria Chambers, Beeley Street, Sheffield S2 4LN. Telephone 0742 28264

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