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Review. Allen, Brooke. Artistic License: Three Centuries of Good Writing and Bad Behavior

Robin Imhof

University of the Pacific, rimhof@pacific.edu

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citizens and how Schiele's treatment of that subject responded to dramatic shifts in politics, philosophy, epistemology, and psychology. Smith organizes her discourse thematically, rather than chronologically, by identifying and charting definitive crises within Viennese culture. Landscapes are grouped into categories of intellectual history, problems of national and personal identity, the limits of linguistic expression, and nostalgia for a lost past. Academic in style and tone, the book offers an exciting approach to Schiele's work and should prompt reevaluation by scholars. Recommended for academic libraries and specialized art collections.—**Rebecca Tolley-Stokes, East Tennessee State Univ., Johnson City**

STEINHART, PETER. The Undressed Art: Why We Draw. Knopf. 2004. 272p. illus. ISBN 1-4000-4184-8. \$23. FINE ARTS

In this meditation on the meaning of drawing (primarily figure drawing from the nude), naturalist/journalist Steinhart brings a measure of science to understanding the perceptions and actions that engage the human mind in the act of drawing. But the book is as much about the activities of the human mind—spontaneous, direct, and unencumbered—as it is about drawing itself. The more successful autobiographical parts of the book are based on Steinhart's several decades of avocational figure drawing. Although there is a bit of concise history about artists' models, this topic, again based on the author's experience and interviews with models over some years, is fresh and highlights the dynamic relationship that can be captured on paper. The virtues of this essentially solitary activity are focus and escape from time, but the resulting object, at its best called art, can speak to others. For Steinhart, drawing can capture our humanity and connect us to nature—no small accomplishment. For general and art theory collections.—**Jack Perry Brown, Art Inst. of Chicago Libs.**

TESKE, EDMUND (photogs.) & JULIAN COX (text). Spirit into Matter: The Photographs of Edmund Teske. Getty. 2004. 154p. photogs. bibliog. index. ISBN 0-89236-760-1. \$70. PHOTOG

Published to accompany a retrospective at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles, this book brings to light the photographs of an artist not well known even among photography scholars. Born in Chicago, Teske (1911–96) migrated to Los Angeles in the 1940s, establishing contacts with artists, patrons, actors, and collectors, among them Frank Lloyd Wright, Aline Barnsdall, Tony Smith, and Walter Hopps. His early photographs adopted a socially aware, docu-

mentary style akin to Walker Evans and Berenice Abbott (he briefly assisted her in the 1930s), and as his work matured, he merged experimental darkroom techniques such as solarization, double exposure, and composite printing with spiritually questing, romantic imagery. Teske didn't invent the solarization process (which results in patterns of rich brown, gray, and rust tonalities), but he elevated it. An essay by Julian Cox (associate curator of photographs, Getty Museum) and an interview with George Herms, an artist friend of Teske, offer a glimpse into the bohemian subculture of mid-century Los Angeles. Beautifully printed plates convey the depth of the solarized prints. For libraries collecting books on contemporary photography.—**Michael Dashkin, Qualcomm, San Diego**

LITERATURE

ALLEN, BROOKE. Artistic License: Three Centuries of Good Writing and Bad Behavior. Ivan R. Dee. Sept. 2004. c.245p. index. ISBN 1-56663-595-0. \$26. UR

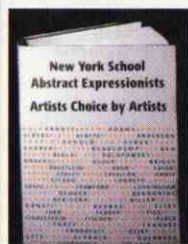
In her second book of collected criticism (after *Twentieth-Century Attitudes: Literary Powers in Uncertain Times*), Allen continues

her fine and unhesitating appraisals of literary biographies and the authors who inspired them. From her pronouncing Lord Byron "one of the great shits of history" to her questioning Joyce Carol Oates's opinions of Jane Austen's writing ("Can Ms. Oates and I be reading the same novels?"), Allen's essays both entertain and illuminate. She is sharply critical of contemporary, politically correct attitudes devaluing the so-called dead white males in the Western literary tradition (which just so happens to describe most of the authors she covers here) and reminds us in her introduction "how very iconoclastic the canonical writers themselves were in their time." Indeed, reading her sketches of these writers' lives makes one more often than not want to reach for the full biography. Recommended for public and academic collections.—**Robin Imhof, Univ. of the Pacific Lib., Stockton, CA**

Civil Disobediences: Poetics and Politics in Action. Coffee House, dist. by Consortium. 2004. c.480p. ed. by Anne Waldman & Lisa Birman. ISBN 1-56689-158-2. pap. \$18. UR
In her introduction, editor Waldman, a latter-day Beat poet, teacher, and author,

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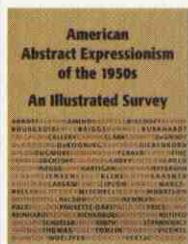
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Highly recommended. General readers; undergraduates through faculty. ~CHOICE (February, 2001)

American Abstract Expressionism of the 1950s An Illustrated Survey. Ed. Marika Herskovic. ISBN: 0-9677994-1-4
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"This excellent publication builds on the earlier [above] publication. It has broadened the scope to include artists from throughout the US, rectified...omissions of African American artists...and concentrated on 88 artists. Highly recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty." ~CHOICE (July, 2003)



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