

Spring 1993

## Ballast Quarterly Review, v08n3, Spring 1993

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B A L L A S T

Volume 8 Number 3

Spring 1993

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I AM A FRIEND of the great pianist, Rudolf Serkin, and I know his touch very well. The following thing happened to me after a meeting with him in Interlaken. Each of us went to his car, and we went away in different directions. It was late at night, and one couldn't see anything—or only very little. Later, I passed a car—one of very many—and heard it's horn, and I knew at once that it was Serkin's touch. The horn of the car was played pianissimo. I was concentrating on driving and was not expecting that I should meet him; I just recognized his personality in this pianissimo touch on the horn—and it was an electric horn.

KARL R. POPPER (science historian and philosopher) in Popper and John C. Eccles, *The Self and Its Brain: An Argument for Interactionism* (London: Routledge, 1990), p. 529. Suggested by Joseph Podlesnik, a reader from Margate, NJ ★

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**BALLAST Quarterly Review**  
Volume 8, Number 3, Spring 1993.  
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founder, editor, art director. This issue  
was designed by Dnumgeis Duerf.

**BALLAST** is an acronym for Books Art Language Logic Ambiguity Science and Teaching, as well as a distant allusion to *Blast*, the short-lived publication founded during World War I by Wyndham Lewis, the Vorticist artist and writer. **BALLAST** is chiefly a pastiche of astonishing passages from books, magazines, diaries and other publications. Put differently, it is a journal devoted to wit, the contents of which are intended to be insightful, amusing or thought-provoking.

The purposes of **BALLAST** are educational, apolitical and noncommercial. It does not carry paid advertisements, nor is it supposed to be purchased or sold. It is published every three months, more or less, beginning in October and ending in June. There is no charge for subscriptions as such, and (to the extent that finances allow) the journal will gladly be mailed to persons who send in a mailing address and two first class U.S. postage stamps for each issue. In other words, to receive **BALLAST** for one year (four issues), we ask that each reader contribute a total of eight genuine unused U.S. postage stamps, interesting or not. Do not send postage meter slips. When subscribing, good-looking, antique and/or unusual stamps are preferred. (At the moment we are particularly interested in the quack grass commemorative stamp—just ask for it at your post office window.) We do *not* accept phone orders ★

ANON Ginger Rogers did everything that Fred Astaire did. She just did it backwards and in high heels ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**HUALING NIEH** (*Mulberry and Peach*): A watermelon that breaks open by itself tastes better than one cut with a knife ★



ABOVE Peter E. Horjus (1990), logo for The Artist's Society derived from Edvard Munch's *The Scream*, from S. Heller and J. Lasky, *Borrowed Design* (1993)★

**ONE EVENING** she [Dame Matthews] saw one of the farm men [named John] steal a pound of butter out of the dairy and put it into his hat, at the same moment clapping his hat upon his head.

"John," called the Dame. "John, come here. I want to speak to you." John came, carefully keeping his hat on his head. The Dame ordered some ale to be heated for him and bade him sit down in front of the roaring fire. John thanked his mistress and said he would have the ale another time, as he wanted to go home at once.

"No, John. Sit you down by the fire and drink some hot ale. 'Tis a cold night and I want to speak to you about the kine [cows]."

The miserable John, daring neither to take off his hat nor go without his mistress's leave, sat before the scorching fire drinking his hot ale til the melting butter in his hat began to run down all over his face. The Dame eyed him with malicious fun. "Now, John," she said, "you may go. I won't charge you anything for the butter."

**FRANCIS KILVERT**, in William Plomer, editor, *Kilvert's Diary. Vol 2: Selections from the Diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert, 23 August 1871 - 13 May 1874* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), p. 298, a source suggested by Charles Moorman, a reader from Fayetteville, Arkansas ★

**ON 29 SEPTEMBER** he said he felt better. The weather was fine and they took him out in a bathchair, into Ravenscourt Park. He said that he was so little tired he felt able to do some walking. At 4:45 Cockerell went to the post and on his return found him upstairs with blood streaming from his mouth. Ellis was with him. They helped him down and put him to bed. Four days later, at 11:15 on 3 October [1896], he quietly died. Almost his last words were, "I want to get mumbo jumbo out of the world."

**JACK LINDSAY** [on the death of William Morris], *William Morris* (London: Constable, 1975), p. 375 ★

★★



**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED**  
Steven Aukstakalnis and David Blatner, *Silicon Mirage: The Art and Science of Virtual Reality* (Berkeley: Peachpit Press, 1992). ISBN 0-938151-82-7. In the computer technology called "virtual reality," the screen is a headset and goggle device (shown above) and commands are transmitted by wearing a glove. The observer's sensation is not that of passively watching a scene, but of being immersed in and moving around on a stage that appears to be virtually real. How does it work? What does it feel like? And where is it likely to lead us? This is an illustrated overview of the possibilities in a field that will probably mushroom ★

**MARGARET ATWOOD**  
(*Bluebeard's Egg*):  
In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt ★

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**COMPTON MACKENZIE** (*Poor Relations*):  
She was a well preserved woman and reminded John of a crystallized pear; her frosted transformation glistened like encrusted sugar round a stalk, which was represented by a tubular head-ornament on the apex of the carefully tended pyramid; her greeting was sticky ★

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**AS SOON AS I** got up to give my lecture [in October 1975 at New Mexico State University at Las Cruces], I was seized with violent diarrhea pains—a nightmare situation come true! It seemed to me that I kept on saying confused sentences, though luckily some of the lecture hung together. No one seemed to have noticed. I even pulled myself together sufficiently to do well in answering questions after the talk. Then of course everything delayed my getting to a lavatory. People asking for autographs, the ones too shy to get up in front of the audience asking their little private questions. There was some difficulty in finding a lavatory. Then when the chairman did take me to one, **NOT IN USE** was written across **MEN** on the door. We found another and as soon as I got into it an elderly gentlemen emerged from one of its stalls and said, "Didn't I meet you twenty years ago? Now where was it? What did you speak about, etc." I said, "Excuse me, I'll speak to you afterwards, outside" and dashed into the place he had left.

**STEPHEN SPENDER** (British poet) in John Goldsmith, editor, *Stephen Spender: Journals 1939-1983* (New York: Random House, 1968), pp. 310-311 ★



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ON THEIR VOYAGE of discovery to Australia, a group of Captain Cook's sailors captured a young kangaroo and brought the strange creature back on board their ship. No one knew what it was, so some men were sent ashore to ask the natives. When the sailors returned they told their mates, "It's a Kangaroo." Many years later it was discovered that when the aboriginals said "Kangaroo," they were not in fact naming the animal but replying to their questioners, "What did you say?"

From *The Observer* magazine (25 November 1973), quoted in Ian Hacking, *Why Does Language Matter to Philosophy?* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1975). Suggested by Mark Iwinski, a reader from Williamsburg, Virginia ★

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Luc Sante, *Evidence* (New York: Noonday Press/Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1992). ISBN 0-374-52365-7. This is a book of 55 homicide evidence photographs, pictures of New York murder victims taken at the scene between 1914-18, accompanied by comments describing the crimes and essays on such subjects as "Contents of Pockets" and "Police Aesthetics." It is a chillingly beautiful book, haunting because of the frozen poses of the bodies, and the odd coexistence of horrific death and exquisitely detailed photography ★

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F. SCOTT FITZGERALD (*This Side of Paradise*): When he came into the room clad in his purple regalia from thatch to toe, he resembled a Turner sunset ★

IT WAS A RED SUNDOWN [near Limerick, Ireland, at the end of World War II] and I was coming with some other fusiliers [foot soldiers] along a wet hill-road by a white-washed cabin and we met a girl with a torn white shift of sorts with a red skirt with a plum-colored hem to the skirt which reached a bit below the knee; and she had auburn hair floating free over her shoulders and in the wind, and her feet and arms were bare and she had a long stick; and she was driving a red-colored cow before her and the evening sun bathed all these differing reds and bronzes.

DAVID JONES (Welsh painter, engraver, and writer), quoted in Rene Hague, ed., *Dai Greatcoat: A Self-Portrait of David Jones in His Letters* (London: Faber and Faber), p. 255. Suggested by Charles Moorman, a reader from Fayetteville, Arkansas ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Tom Trusky, *Some Zines: American Alternative & Underground Magazines, Newsletters & APAs* (Boise, ID: Cold-drill Press/Boise State, 1992).

ISBN 0-916272-56-7. This is the catalog for an exhibition of "zines" (pronounced zeens), offbeat noncommercial periodicals like BALLAST, held at the BSU Student Union last fall.

Among the 80 zines displayed were *The Monthly Independent*

*Tribune Times Journal Post Gazette News Chronicle Bulletin*, which featured a fish-drawn map, and *Vidpuni*, devoted to Vorlin, an invented language which is, from the magazine's viewpoint, the universal language (*vidpuni* means "viewpoint" in Vorlin).

Stimulated by a newspaper zine directory called *Factsheet Five* (1800 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94102), thousands of zines are being produced and exchanged through the mail. Some are super, others trash. Trusky's full-color zine catalog is absolutely wonderful, beautifully designed by Will Spearman and Joaquin Tall, with more than 50 pages of commentary on some of the wildest, most interesting zines. To buy a copy, send \$19.95 postpaid to the BSU Bookstore, Boise, ID 83725 or call Prof. Trusky at (208) 385-1577 ★

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED "Novelties and Practical Jokes in America" by Steven Heller and Steven Guarnaccia in *PRINT Magazine* (November/December 1992), pp. 80ff. An amusing account of the origins of rubber vomit, squirting flowers, exploding cigars, dead chickens, and poo-poo cushions, with great photographs of the jokes and the mail-order catalogs that sell them ★

I HAVE DESIGNED the last 10 issues of *Emigré* with a program called ReadySetGo! and I think I am the only designer in the world who uses it. I am using a very old version, 4.5, that doesn't even let you rotate type. I do that because I feel more comfortable working within strict parameters. One of the biggest problems with the Macintosh as it grew up has been that I have found myself tinkering with software for too long, without any real creative thoughts going through my mind any more. So in the end, I thought perhaps sometimes it is better not to have the option of changing your headline into the shape of a fish.

RUDY VANDERLANS (graphic design and *Emigré* editor), interviewed by Julia Thrift in *Eye: The International Review of Graphic Design*. Issue number 7, volume 2 (1992), pp. 15-16 ★

HARVEY HESS [Iowa haiku kingpin]:  
Beauty is in the eye of the shareholder.

Discretion is the better part of squalor.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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I DREAMED I was out coursing with two greyhounds each of which had only one eye. They started a hare apiece at the same moment, but each greyhound could only see the hare that the other was coursing. The consequence was that both hares escaped and both greyhounds knocked their heads against a stone wall.

FRANCIS KILVERT, in William Plomer, ed., *Kilvert's Diary*. Vol 1: *Selections from the Diary of Rev. Francis Kilvert, 1 January 1870-19 August 1871* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), p. 103 ★

EVELYN  
WAUGH  
We are  
all  
Ameri-  
cans at  
puberty;  
we die  
French.



LEFT Olaf Gulbransson, Portrait of Leo Tolstoy, originally published in *Simplicissimus* (c. 1909), from Steven Heller and Gail Anderson, *The Savage Mirror: The Art of Contemporary Caricature* (New York: Watson-Guptil, 1992). ISBN 0-8230-4644-3. This full-color anthology of "distorted portraits" (by the authors of *Graphic Wit*) begins with a helpful historic review then turns to a plenteous sampling of current comic portraiture ★

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HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Alison Cole with London National Gallery, *Perspective* (New York: Dorling Kindersley, 1992). ISBN 1-56458-068-7. If books like computers can be "user-friendly," this must certainly be one. It's part of the Eyewitness Art Series, advertised as "like having your own private art gallery or museum," and in some ways it's probably better than that. Absolutely bulging with high quality illustrations, it has the playfulness and air of children's books (great gift for kids) and yet it's impressively technical too. Every page is delightful, with shots of models of Vermeer's room interiors, the Ames distorted room, Hoogstraten's peepshow, and so on. A great little book ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



HIGHLY RECOMMENDED M. Kasper, *All Cotton Briefs:*

*Expanded Edition* (Brooklyn: Benzene, 1993; funded by Xeric Foundation; available for \$9.00 postpaid from Left Turn Must Turn Left, 106

High Street, Florence, MA 01060; make checks payable to M. Kasper). ISBN 0-939194-05-8. This is the third edition (we featured the original eight years ago in the first issue of BALLAST) of an album of "high humor," consisting of illustrated short-prose, experimental cartoons, anecdotes, parodies, and miniature essays, with hand-lettered texts, drawings, and collages.

As evidenced by the sample reproduced here it is elegant and droll, or, as one reviewer wrote, "A Kasper a day keeps the moodles away"★

"YOU EUROPEANS think it disgraceful to expose your bodies," a Japanese once told me, "but you shamelessly expose your minds. Everybody knows how men and women are made, so we see no shame in uncovering our bodies. We think it improper to uncover our thoughts."

WILLIAM PLOVER, *The Autobiography of William Plover* (New York: Taplinger, 1976), p. 203★

FRAN LEBOWITZ (*Metropolitan Life*): There is no such thing as inner peace. There is only nervousness or death ★

SHIRLEY MACLAINE (*Out on a Limb*): I've made so many movies playing a hooker that they don't pay me in the regular way anymore. They leave it on the dresser ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

BY THE 1680'S FEW COULD AFFORD THE CLOTHES ADVERTISED IN THE PAINTINGS OF HENLING & VAN EYCK



The phrase 'to fleece someone' originated as follows: In 1279, precisely 700 years ago, a group of proto-enterprising brokers in Antwerp announced an increase in the price of wool. They justified it to the weavers with a concoction about an infestation of sheep ked, across the Channel, in the large English flocks whose fleece the brokers sold. Prices were up in London, they lied, and anyway cash was required to enlarge local, Low Country, wool production capacity. It was a matter of developing self-sufficiency. A few new ewes were needed. If the proposed price change was accepted immediately, the brokers continued slyly, they could all count on an inexpensive, reliable supply for the future. Otherwise, looms would lie idle.

As a matter of fact, between 1280 and 1310, wool prices rose from seven to 17 livres per sack. Those brokers had simply invented a shortage in order to bump up and perpetuate their own already inflated profits.

Another phrase which came out of the Antwerp affair, incidentally, is 'to pull the wool over someone's eyes'.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED David Brier, *Typographic Design* (New York: Madison Square Press/Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1992). ISBN 0-942604-23-7. This is essentially a show of 600 of the finest examples of typographic design produced from 1980 to 1990, as determined by three well-known figures in graphic design: Kit Hinrichs (Pentagram), Richard Wilde (School of Visual Arts), and Fred Woodward (*Rolling Stone*). That's an average of only 60 pieces per year, making the sin of omission inevitable. Nevertheless, the result is an invigorating and very attractive reference work, with more than 250 large format pages of full-color reproductions of logos, letterheads, page layouts, posters, packaging, and so on ★



ABOVE Anon, logo for the British electronics firm Plessey, from Ruari McLean, *The Thames and Hudson Manual of Typography* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1988) ★

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ONE DAY A MAN had tracked a deer to its lair, and at night returned and lay in wait till the deer should come out of the thicket. It was a dark night and he lay behind a holly bush. Presently the deer came out of its lair and lifted its head to browse upon the branches. The man fired and the deer fell. The man ran up to bleed the deer and found he had shot a woman dead. She was out in the forest gathering holly to sell at Winchester or Salisbury.

Some time after this Vincent was in a company of people talking of this sad accident when he saw a man making signs to him to hold his tongue. Presently looking round upon the company to see what was wrong he observed a man with his face turned away and great tears running down his cheeks. It was the man who had fired the fatal shot.

FRANK KILVERT, in William Plomer, editor, *Kilvert's Diary. Vol 2: Selections from the Diary of the Rev Francis Kilvert, 23 August 1871 - 13 May 1874* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), pp. 283-284 ★

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Harry Robin, *Scientific Image: From Cave to Computer* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1992). ISBN 0-8109-3823-5. We've put this on the shelf beside Gyorgy Kepes, *The New Landscape in Art and Science*, and Edward R. Tufte, *The Display of Qualitative Information and Envisioning Information* (not listed in the bibliography) because it is largely a history of "scientific visual communication" or, in the broadest sense, scientific illustration. The range of examples is very wide, from a sampling of computer imagery, to Otto Lilienthal's diagram of the geometry of a stork's wing, Galileo's exquisite watercolors of six phases of the moon, particle traces in a bubble chamber, and a photo of Nikola Tesla calmly reading in his laboratory while surrounded by menacing tentacles of artificial lightning ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** Charles Simic, *Dime-Store Alchemy: The Art of Joseph Cornell* (Hopewell, NJ: Ecco Press, 1992). ISBN 0-88001-303-6. Not just another book on the "poetic spaces" of Cornell, this feels more like a box itself, a concoction of fragments and ephemeral thoughts by a prominent American poet, inspired by Cornell's surrealist approach, and an earlier, equally wonderful book by Guy Davenport, *A Balthus Notebook* (Ecco, 1989) ★

**AS A BOY** he [Lord Dufferin] was an eccentric in that, during intense concentration, he would literally eat his handkerchief and suck ink from the end of a pen without realizing what he was doing.

**JAMES LEE-MILNE** (diary entry dated 4 April 1945) in Simon Brett, editor, *The Faber Book of Diaries* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), p. 122 ★



**LEFT** Drawing by Iowa-based illustrator Gary Kelley, whose illustrated book-length version of Guy de Maupassant's short story *The Necklace* (Mankato, MN, and New York: Creative Education, and Stewart Tabori and Chang, 1992) is currently in bookstores ★

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**I READ THIS MORNING** in the paper the following announcement: "The Pope has got a child." I felt surprised, and on reading the passage again found that I had made a mistake. The telegram was really this, "The Pope has got a chill."

**FRANK KILVERT**, in William Plover, editor, *Kilvert's Diary. Vol 3: Selections from the Diary of the Rev. Francis Kilvert, 14 May 1874 - 13 March 1879* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1960), p. 140 ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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[IN 1946, PHILOSOPHER KARL POPPER was invited to speak to a Cambridge University philosophical club led by Ludwig Wittgenstein. Popper began with a humorous reference to the difference between philosophical "puzzles" and "problems," a distinction stressed by Wittgenstein, who responded angrily to the joke. Popper continued, but Wittgenstein again interrupted. Popper then] mentioned moral problems and the problem of the validity of moral rules. At that point Wittgenstein, who was sitting near the fire and had been nervously playing with the poker, which he sometimes used like a conductor's baton to emphasize his assertions, challenged me: "Give an example of a moral rule!" I replied: "Not to threaten visiting lecturers with pokers." Whereupon Wittgenstein, in a rage, threw the poker down and stormed out of the room, banging the door behind him.

I really was very sorry...[as] I had never intended to make him angry; and it was a surprise to find him unable to take a joke. I realized only later that he probably did indeed feel that I was joking, and that it was this that offended him.

KARL POPPER, *Unended Quest: An Intellectual Autobiography* (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court Publishing, 1976), p. 123 ★

THE RABBI'S WIFE told me that all her uncles and aunts are deaf; they may scream as loud as they like in their Uncle Jacob's ear to no purpose, but, by addressing his nose, he becomes quite accessible; an aunt's mode of approach is her teeth.

CAROLINE FOX (diary entry dated 29 March 1843) in Simon Brett, editor, *The Faber Book of Diaries* (London: Faber and Faber, 1989), p. 114 ★

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Rosalie Maggio, editor, *The Beacon Book of Quotations by Women* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992). ISBN 0-8070-6764-4. At every turn there is a new book of quotations, as distinct from a book of new quotations. Although the quotes in this one range from antiquity to the present, most are unfamiliar, and, while more or less restricted to women authors, the subject matter is extremely varied, the selections both thoughtful and provocative. One of the best collections of quotes in recent years★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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DURING MARY'S ABSENCE I have taken over the duty of watering the plants in the apartment, and I find that the dislike I had for one of them because it depressed me with its ailing appearance is changing to affection. I move it to a location favorable to its need for shade, I water it carefully and trim off the dried leaves, and I am reminded of my lifelong conviction that a powerful means of arousing love for someone or something is to do things for that person or object. Teachers and doctors are aware of it. The Freudians can do no better than call it counter-transference. I would even be willing to believe that self-love is so strong because the self is the person for whom one does the most.

RUDOLF ARNHEIM, *Parables of Sun Light: Observations on Psychology, the Arts, and the Rest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), pp. 157-158 ★

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A JAPANESE ARTIST was commissioned by an American to do a painting. The completed work had, in a lower corner, the branch of a cherry tree with a few blossoms and a bird perched upon it. The entire upper half of the painting was white. Unhappy, the American asked the artist to put something else in the painting because it looked, well, so bare. The Japanese refused the request. When pressed for an explanation, the artist said that if he did fill up the painting, there would be no space for the bird to fly.

ROBERT A. ROSENSTONE, *Mirror in the Stone*. Suggested by Mark Faga, a reader from Cedar Falls, Iowa ★

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** Robert Bringhurst, *The Elements of Typographic Style* (Point Roberts, WA: Hartley & Marks, 1992). ISBN 0-88179-033-8. This book has been strongly recommended for "all desktop typographers" as well as everyone else in design by typographic legend Hermann Zapf, who says he thinks it ought to be "the Typographers' Bible." Written by a highly regarded Canadian typographer, book designer, and poet, it is an astonishing handbook, a catalog of rules of thumb for beginning as well as experienced typographers, albeit with a bias toward the Private Press Movement, Penguin-era Tschichold, and other classics ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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OTHER RECENT REMARKABLE BOOKS

[TWO OLD BROTHERS who lived together in a mountain cottage] were reclusive and illiterate. One or the other used to come down once a week to Hay to draw their old-age pensions. They signed with a cross. Once, when one of the brothers came down, and somebody asked how the other was, he said, "I don't know what's the matter with him. He's been lying in bed these last two or three days and when I speak to him he won't answer me." It was felt that the silent brother might be ill and in need of attention, so somebody went up to investigate. His silence was easily accounted for; he had been dead for some time.

WILLIAM PLOVER, *The Autobiography of William Plover* (New York: Taplinger, 1976), p. 369 ★

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COVER Eric Gill, Self-portrait, 1927. Wood-engraving, from Fiona MacCarthy, *Eric Gill: A Lover's Quest for Art and God* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1989), p. 184 ★

Hugh Aldersey-Williams, *World Design* (NY: Rizzoli, 1992). ISBN 0-8478-1461-0. Beautifully designed and illustrated visual and verbal comparative view of nationalistic and global tendencies in international design ★

Anne L. McDonald, *Feminine Ingenuity: Women and Invention in America* (NY: Ballantine Books, 1992). ISBN 0-345-35811-2. An account of the largely unheralded role of American women inventors, considered in relation to the evolution of women's rights ★

David Brett, *C.R. Mackintosh: The Poetics of Workmanship* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1992). ISBN 0-674-54065-4. A brief but precisely constructed account of the unifying associative system that may have been largely instinctively used in designing buildings, interiors, and furniture by this great Scottish practitioner of "rectilinear Art Nouveau" ★

Adam Phillips, *On Kissing, Tickling and Being Bored: Psychoanalytic Essays on the Unexamined Life* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1992). ISBN 0-674-63462-4. According to William James, productive ideas may often result from the residue (the stuff that falls between the cracks) of prevailing paradigms. Written by a somewhat maverick British psychoanalyst, these wonderfully readable essays discuss the role of neglected aspects of everyday life such as worrying, tickling, and laughter ★

John Miller, editor, *On Suicide: Great Writers on the Ultimate Question* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1992). ISBN 0-8118-0231-0. Twenty-two excellent essays, stories, and other writings on a subject of renewed concern by Langston Hughes, Walker Percy, Cynthia Ozick, Gustave Flaubert, and others ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

**BALLAST** is published in Iowa in a region increasingly listed among the most desirable places in which to live (okay, so why not move here soon before we all go stir crazy!). All subscriptions (including gift subscriptions) must be mailed to the following address:

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**BALLAST** doesn't have a budget really. For eight years, it has operated at a loss. Even if we demanded stamps from everyone who receives the magazine, we would still lose money on printing, without beginning to cover the costs of deuteranopia, agitation, torpescence, malversation, vagary, ferment, and cross-examination. Such losses are currently offset by donations from enlightened subscribers and generous deductions from the Reader Service Boy's paycheck. If anyone is foolishly philanthropic (foolish because such contributions are surely not tax deductible), we will sometimes accept a check (made payable to Roy R. Behrens), unusual seeds (garden and flower), or costume masks ★

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** Rick Poyner and Edward Booth-Clibborn, editors, *Typography Now: The Next Wave* (Cincinnati: North Light Books [American distributor], 1993). ISBN 0-904866-904. A wonderful large format, full-color album of European and American cutting-edge typography, consisting of works that are normally called Post-Modern, Deconstructivist, New Wave, and so on, in which conventional legibility is downplayed in favor of cryptically layered assaults ("The Bauhaus mistook legibility for communication") or "typography as discourse." Many are stunningly beautiful forms (which isn't always the intention), and a number of those responsible are household heroes in design, including Katherine McCoy, Tibor Kalman, Neville Brody, April Greiman, and Rudy VanderLans ★



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