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HERB
SHRINER
Our doctor
would never
really operate
unless it was
necessary. He
was just that
way. If he didn't need the
money, he
wouldn't lay a
hand on you.

WOODY ALLEN O.F. Krumgold has written a brilliant paper about certain tribes in Borneo that do not have a word for "no" in their language and consequently turn down requests by nodding their heads and saying "I'll get back to you."

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 mainly a pastiche of astonishing passages from books, magazines, diaries and other writings. 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 advertisements, nor is it supposed to be purchased or sold. It is published approximately every three months, beginning in the fall (more or less) and ending in the summer.

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Does it matter?—losing your sight?...

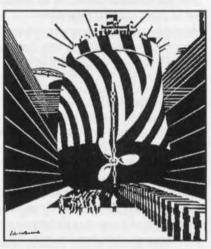
There's such splendid work for the blind;

And people will always be kind,
As you sit on the terrace remembering
And turning your face to the

And turning your face to the light.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON from his poem "Does It Matter?" in reference to blinded World War I soldiers.

GUY MURCHIE [Song of the Sky] Clouds are the sheet music of the heavens, the architecture of moving air...some are ragged coattails of storms that have passed. Some are stagnant blankets of warm air resting on cold. Some are mare's tails floating in the chill upper sky. Some are herringbones, sheets, cream puffs, ox-bends, veils, hammerheads, spangled mantillas, sponges, black shrouds.



A B O V E Woodcut of a camouflaged World War I ship by E D W A R D W A D S W O R T H (c. 1918), the wellknown British Vorticist who also served as a dock supervisor for naval camouflage.

STANLEY
ELKIN
A truth about
art is the company it keeps
with the slightly askew, the
fly in that
woodpile of
symmetry.

JEAN
COCTEAU
An artist must
make his way
on foot. He is a
cat that walks
by itself.

D O N N A
T A R T T
A spider of
anxiety
crawled up the
back of my
neck.

KATE LEARSON So many people who say they are artists are just technicians who are trying to capture the PR wave of something avantgarde; the work may be different, but the intention sometimes looks so shallow. So many people now, not only in painting and sculpture but in music and probably literature, seem to be producing cheap knockoffs and are into just promoting themselves.

A N O N The food here is plain poison. And such small portions! HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Gertrude Stein: When This You See, Remember Me. Produced and directed by Perry Miller Adato, 1970. VHS color video. 89 minutes. (Distributed by Meridian Video Corporation, 1575 Westwood Boulevard, Suite 303, Los Angeles CA 90024 @ 800 529-2300.) This rich, entertaining documentary is largely a film version of Gertrude Stein's gossip-filled autobiography published in 1932, which she cleverly mistitled The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. It combines passages from her writings with vintage photographs, amateur film clips, her famous art collection, her lyrics set to music, and brief excerpts from delightfully candid conversations with people who knew her in Paris, among them Virgil Thomson, Genet, Maurice Grosser, Jacques Lipschitz, Daniel-Henri Kahnweiler and Bennett Cerf. Dozens of other key players are also remembered: William James, Ambroise Vollard, Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Juan Gris, Carl Van Vechten, Ernest Hemingway, Ezra Pound, Edith Sitwell, James Joyce, T.S. Eliot, Thornton Wilder and others. So it's far more than simply the story of Stein and her life with Toklas. There is never a dull moment in this fast-paced, jam-packed guided tour of the emergence of Modern Art, both literary and artistic.

W O O D Y A L L E N Show business is dog eat dog. It's worse than dog eat dog. It's dog doesn't return dog's phone calls.

LEO ROSENBERG

First you forget names, then you forget faces, then you forget to pull your zipper up, then you forget to pull your zipper down.

G E O R G E A D E One man's poison ivy is another man's spinach.

BERYL PFIZER I wonder what language truck drivers are using, now that everyone is using theirs? There were bugs in the hotel and I suggested to [John] Ruskin [the celebrated Victorian art critic, with whom he was traveling in Northern France] that we should move elsewhere. Ruskin replied, "Damn the bugs! If they'd been scorpions you'd have had a right to complain."

SYDNEY COCKERELL quoted in Wilfrid Blunt, Cockerell (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), p. 42.

You should have known Daddy. He was the only person I have ever known who was as grand as you. He had the wild thing in him, that's what killed him. He had the most beautiful smile, the corners of his mouth and his whole face seemed to turn up and it was just as if someone had turned on a light. He was always making a joke to make people feel good: he said the funniest things, you never knew anything like it in your life; I know one time when Jessie Huge and I were going to art school together she got awfully blue because she couldn't finish the drawing she was working on. She came home with me one day and cried as if her heart would break. Daddy came in and put his arms about her and said "What's the matter?" Jessie said, "I can't draw." Daddy said "Ah, my dear but you can attract." I remember he got us both to laughing so we forgot all about the drawing. He was always doing things like that.

ROSE WING Many years ago, I was just teaching away one day. History. And this boy said, "Miss Wing, you're such a good history teacher." Well, with that, I just beamed. My day was made. Then he added, "You've lived through so much of it."

THOMAS WOLFE The Notebooks of Thomas Wolfe. Volume 2. Edited by Richard S. Kennedy and Paschal Reeves (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1970), p. 430.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Steven Heller and Teresa Fernandes, Becoming a Graphic Designer: A Guide to Careers in Design (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1999). ISBN 0-471-29299-0. Everyday, more and more university students are choosing some area of design as a career field. This guidebook is divided into four major information sections: Design Specialties, Design Businesses, Design Options and Design Education, followed by a Resource Guide, which consists of the names and addresses of design-related organizations and publications. Interwoven with these sections are portions of interviews with about 90 design professionals on such subjects as How I Became a Graphic Designer; Advice to Designers; On Personal Style; Major Influences; and The Future of Graphic Design. Other informative features include How Many Graphic Designers Are There? What Do They Earn? and The Optimum Portfolio. For the curious but uninformed, this is very likely the best introduction available.

MIES VAN DER ROHE Architecture begins when you place two bricks carefully together. On one of their walks together, his [Dr. Seuss's] father told him about his business trip that day to Northampton, where he had retained the young lawyer Calvin Coolidge to collect brewery debts from shopkeepers. He and Coolidge had stopped in a saloon where the special was two martinis for twenty-five cents. After his first drink, the frugal Coolidge rose. "I'll be back tomorrow for the other one," he said.

JUDITH AND NEIL MORGAN Dr. Seuss and Mr. Geisel (New York: Random House, 1995), p. 13.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Memories of Berlin: Twilight of Weimar Culture. A film by Gary Conklin. VHS color video. 72 minutes. (Produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation / Distributed by Arthur Cantor Films, 2112 Broadway, Suite 400, New York NY 10023 @ 212 496-5710) The brief, famous era in German history called "the Weimar Republic" began in 1919 at the close of World War I, and ended when the Nazis took control in 1933. It was a period of political and economic turmoil, in which, as Gestalt psychologist and art theorist Rudolf Arnheim (who lived through it) has written, "Anything that can be wrong with a society was wrong; anything that could be right with a society was right." A montage of memories of the intellectual and artistic life of the time, this magnificent video is made up of fragments of interviews with more than a dozen people who directly contributed to it. Among them are Christopher Isherwood and Arthur Koestler, who talk about literature; Louise Brooks, Lotte Eisner, Elisabeth Bergner and Francis Lederer about film and theatre; Claudio Arrau and Gregor Piatigorsky about music; Herbert Bayer and Ise Gropius (the wife of Bauhaus director Walter Gropius) about architecture, design and the visual arts. Among the film's best moments is Piatigorsky's recollection of an evening in which he attended a recital by Albert Einstein, who was far better as a physicist than as a violinist. Afterwards, when Einstein asked him "How did I play?," Platigorsky thought for a moment and replied, "Relatively well."

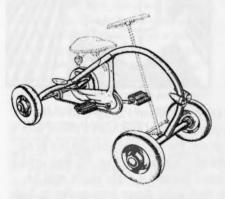
MARTIN FREUD [Sigmund Freud's son] I didn't know the full facts of life until I was 17. My father never talked about his work.

PHILIP LARKIN Books are a load of crap.

WOODY ALLEN I thought of that old joke, you know, this guy goes to a psychiatrist and says, "Doc, my brother's crazy. He thinks he's a chicken." And the doctor says, "Why don't you turn him in?" And the guy says, "I would, but I need the eggs."

A N O N A guy goes to a psychiatrist and says, "Doc, my wife thinks she's a refrigerator." And the doctor says, "What's so bad about that?" And the guy says, "The problem is she snores and the light keeps me awake at night."

KEN DODD Freud's theory was that when a jokes opens a window and all those bats and bogeymen fly out, you get a marvelous feeling of relief and elation.



LEFT
Patent drawing
for Velocipede
invented in 1941 by
E.J. WELLER,
JR.

Occasionally I even made music with Albert Einstein, who is known to have been no great musician. He was a great music lover and an impassioned violinist, but could not take any criticism of his playing and was apt to fly into a rage when he botched something. One day he was playing Bach's Double Concerto with an excellent professional violinist, Gerhart Hauptmann's daughter-in-law, and me at the piano. Suddenly he lit into his partner, whose big tone was drowning him out: "Don't play so loud!" I believe he got more excited then than he ever would have in a scientific dispute.

BRIGITTE B. FISCHER My European Heritage (Boston: Branden Publishing Co., 1986), p. 10.

SAMUEL GOLDWYN Any man who would go to psychiatrist ought to have his head examined.

W. H. A U D E N The ear tends to be lazy, craves the familiar and is shocked by the unexpected; the eye, on the other hand, tends to be impatient, craves the novel and is bored by repetition.

RIGHT
Woodcut of dazzle
camouflage being
applied to a World
War I ship by
EDWARD
WADSWORTH
(c. 1918).



MARY COSTIGAN When I taught kindergarten in a church basement, the men's room was a couple of doors down from the kindergarten proper. I missed a little boy but knew that he was probably in the restroom. I waited a little while and he never came back. So I went down and spoke to him through the door, asked him if he was having problems or anything. I didn't get any answer. I kept talking to him, telling him to hurry up. No answer. Finally, I told him I was going to come and get him. To which the pastor's voice replied, "I'm in here."

R O N A L D K N O X The room smelt of not having been smoked in. Joseph Campbell once told me how he kept himself from not writing. The device was "the piece of paper" he put on his desk as he got ready for his morning's writing chore. All the jobs his mind conjured up to keep him from writing he noted down for postponement. This left him with nothing but the writing job he was trying to avoid.

RUDOLF ARNHEIM in a letter on 26 August 1999.

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES The sea remembers nothing. It is feline. It licks your feet,— its huge flanks purr very pleasantly for you; but it will crack your bones and eat you, for all that, and wipe the crimsoned foam from its jaws as if nothing had happened.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED

Thomas A.P. van Leeuwen, The Springboard in the Pond: An Intimate History of the Swimming Pool (Cambridge MA: MIT Press, 1999). ISBN 0-262-22059-8. This is the second in an anticipated series of five unorthodox books by a Dutch historian on architecture in relation to the four classical elements: sky, water, fire and earth. The first volume, about the metaphysics of the American skyscraper, was published in 1988; while the third, which will focus on buildings destroyed by fire, is in preparation. This second volume, which is illustrated by more than 200 drawings, plans and vintage photographs, is a wonderful visual and verbal review of the origin and evolution of the domestic swimming pool, which is, as the author describes it, "the architectural outcome of man's desire to become one with the element of water, privately and free of danger." To swim in a hole in the backyard, he continues, "is a complex and curious activity, one that oscillates between joy and fear, between domination and submission, for the swimmer delivers himself with controlled abandonment to the forces of gravity, resulting in sensations of weight- and timelessness." This is a history of architecture, as exemplified by a single building type; while, at the same time, it is a rich, multi-faceted social history in which the behavior of humans toward water is shown in relation to religion, sex, art, psychology, engineering and architecture.

MARCEL PROUST

Everything we think of as great has come to us from neurotics. It is they and they alone who found religions and create great works of art. The world will never realize how much it owes to them and what they have suffered in order to bestow their gifts on it.

F. SCOTT
FITZGERALD
All good writing is swimming under
water and
holding your
breath.

CHINESE
PROVERB
You can't stop
the birds of
sorrow from
flying overhead, but you
can stop them
from building
nests in your
hair.

S Y D N E Y
S M I T H
[referring to
Thomas
Macaulay] He
not only overflowed with
learning, but
stood in the
slop.

H.L. MENCKEN College professors in one-building universities on the prairie, still hoping, at the age of sixty, to get their whimsical essays into the Atlantic Monthly.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Wendy Kaplan, The Art That Is Life: The Arts and Crafts Movement in America 1875-1920 (Boston: Bulfinch Press / Little, Brown and Company and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 1998). ISBN 0-8212-2554-5. This paperback is a reprint edition of an important exhibition catalog that was originally issued in 1987. The exhibition, which was held at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and which bore the same title as this book, was comprised of 225 design-related artifacts (furniture, glass, silver, ceramics, textiles, wallpaper, books and architectural drawings) from the era in design and architectural history known as the American Arts and Crafts movement. The book is important because of the thoroughness with which it documents, interprets, and illustrates the moral, esthetic and social reforms that enabled the Arts and Crafts movement to flourish. Included in the 400-page volume are eight essays by various experts on the subject, who introduce more than 300 photographs (including 55 color plates) in discussing a wide range of topics, among them American Arts and Crafts Architecture, The Art of Work, The Role of the Schools, House and Home, and A More Reasonable Way to Dress. The text and illustrations provide ample evidence of the continuing influence of Arts and Crafts: "In altering attitudes toward the fabrication and use of objects," writes curator Wendy Kaplan, "it changed the fundamental perceptions regarding design, the home, and work."

WILLIAM
JAMES
Footnotes, the
little dogs yapping at the
heels of the
text.

My [childhood asthma] attacks mostly occurred at night. I would awake my parents. My room was totally dark until the door opened; framed against the light from the corridor I could see the figure of Pop holding a charged hypodermic syringe. Although this brought instant relief it has left me with a fearsome dread of injections. I get in a complete state of panic when I need to be inoculated. My dentist is now accustomed to filling my teeth without any form of anaesthetic: I prefer the pain of the drill to the horror of the needle.

DONALD SINDEN A Touch of the Memoirs (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982), pp. 27.

MAN RAY I think that rather than taking banal representations of a view, it is better to take my handkerchief from my pocket, twist it as I want, and photograph it as I wish.



In art I am focused on one point where everything comes together; this point determines all the relationships. If I lose it, reality gains the upper hand, and I am reduced to nothing. I become weak, fainthearted, despairing, almost intolerably restless, irritable—and if I rediscover that point, I feel comfortable, good ideas come to me unbidden, I am devout, in harmony, and all is well.

OSKAR SCHLEMMER in Tut Schlemmer, ed., The Letters and Diaries of Oskar Schlemmer. (Middletown CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1972), p. 122. LEFT Woodcut
of a Gothic
Cathedral by
LIONEL
FEININGER
(1919), used by
Walter Gropius as
the illustration for
his Manifesto and
Program of the
Weimar Bauhaus,
which was in part a
consequence of the
Arts and Crafts
movement.

ALBERT
EINSTEIN
When a man
sits with a
pretty girl for
an hour, it
seems like a
minute. But let
him sit on a
hot stove for a
minute—and
it's longer than
an hour. That's
relativity.

S A M U E L
B U T L E R
It was very
good of God
to let [Thomas]
Carlyle and
Mrs. Carlyle
marry one
another and so
make only two
people miserable instead of
four.

BELOW One of the original drawings from Lewis Carroll's Through the Looking-glass and What Alice Found There (1871). It's Sir John Tenniel's rendition of a paradoxical creature called "the Bread-and-butterfly," which has wings of bread-and-butter, a body of crust, and a lump of sugar for a head. It lives on weak tea with cream in it, and if it doesn't eat, it will of course die. Unfortunately, it will also die if it eats, since its head will dissolve while drinking the tea.



RECOMMENDED The Private World of Lewis Carroll. Narrated by Mia Farrow and Tom Courtenay. VHS color and black and white video. 48 minutes. In Finnegans Wake, James Joyce laments the use of psychoanalysis in critical studies of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland: "We grisly old Sykos have done our unsmiling bit on 'Alices," he writes, "when they were yung and easily freudened." As its title indicates, this video has less to do with Alice as literature than with the psychological intricacies of the shy and presumably frustrated man who wrote that provocative, multilayered "children's story." Based on information in the diaries and correspondence of the Rev. Charles Dodgson (1832-1989), alias Lewis Carroll, who wrote 99,000 letters in his lifetime, this film emphasizes his obsession with prepubescent girls, which may have been consciously pure of intent. Indeed, his most important book began when he wrote down a story that he had invented for a child named Alice Liddell. A pioneering photographer, he photographed some of these children unclothed, but always with the permission of their parents, who also remained present. Were he alive today, he would surely be suspected of having the desires and capabilities, however latent, of a sexual deviant, yet the fact remains that he was an extraordinary literary and mathematical genius. He was, as Judith Bloomingdale wrote, "a poor lecturer to boys at Oxford" who was "at the same time the fascinating teller of enchanted tales to little girls."

THOMAS CARLYLE If Jesus Christ were to come today, people would not even crucify him. They would ask him to dinner, and hear what he had to say, and make fun of it.

Sometimes, out of pure meanness, when I make something [as a steelworker). I put a little dent in it. I like to do something to make it really unique. Hit it with a hammer. I deliberately ---- it up to see if it'll get by, just so I can say I did it. It could be anything. Let me put it this way: I think God invented the dodo bird so when we get up there we could tell Him, "Don't you ever make mistakes?" and He'd say, "Sure, look." (Laughs.) I'd like to make my imprint. My dodo bird. A mistake, mine. Let's say the whole building is nothing but red bricks. I'd like to have just the black one or the white one or the purple one. Deliberately ---- up.

MIKE LEFEVRE (a Chicago steelworker) interviewed in Studs Terkel, Working (New York: Avon, 1975), pp. 9-10.

FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT A doctor can bury his mistakes, but an architect can only advise his clients to plants vines.



ABOVE
Lounge chair by
WOLFGANG
HOFFMAN
(1936), who was
the son of the
Viennese architect
and designer Josef
Hoffman.

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED Michael Bierut, Jessica Helfand, Steven Heller and Rick Poynor, editors, Looking Closer 3: Classic Writings on Graphic Design. (New York: Allworth Press and The American Institute of Graphic Arts, 1999). ISBN 1-58115-022-9. This is the latest in a series of books that consist of collections of essays about the theory and practice of graphic design. The essays in the first two volumes were mostly from contemporary sources, particularly the AIGA Journal of Graphic Design. This third, retrospective volume is of even greater value in the sense that it gathers under one cover some of the most important historic writings on design from the late 19th century to the early 1980s, arranged chronologically. It contains over fifty hard-to-find articles by prominent figures in graphic design, among them William Morris, W.A. Dwiggins, El Lissitzky, Varvara Stepanova, Gyorgy Kepes, Alexander Rodchenko, Ladislav Sutnar, Beatrice Warde and Wolfgang Weingart. Graphic designers need to know where they came from, in order to better decide where to go. A substantial contribution to that effort, undoubtedly this is a book that should be on the reading lists of all designers, design students and teachers.

YIDDISH PROVERB I've heard it before. That joke has a long beard.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV My father was a salad of racial genes. I may mention that handshaking as a good-by was not merely the custom of that family but the custom of the region—the custom of Missouri, I may say. In all my life up to that time [the night of his brother's departure, just before his death! I had never seen one member of the Clemens family kiss another one—except once. When my father lay dying in our home in Hannibal he put his arm around my sister's neck and drew her down and kissed her, saying, "Let me die." I remember that, and I remember the death rattle which swiftly followed those words, which were his last.

SAMUEL L. CLEMENS
The Autobiography of Mark Twain. Charles
Neider, ed. (New York: Harper and
Brothers, 1959), p. 99.

I was in New York City on VJ day. No one can imagine what it was like to be a Marine on VJ night in New York City. People hugged me, girls kissed memy hand was sore from being shaken. Then I went and did something stupid. I bought a pint of very bad whiskey called "America the Brave." It was even worse than raisin jack. I drank the whole bottle in four minutes and proceeded to get sick on the curb at Broadway and 47th Street. I presented an awful picture, a disgrace to my uniform, my country, and to the Great White Way. Why, on this night of all nights, I chose to get drunk instead of enjoying the moment is something I have often asked myself, since I could have been dancing in the streets with a Rockette from Radio City in my arms, or a Smith girl like the ones I used to ogle at the Biltmore. I could have been taken to the Stork Club by a divorcee whose boyfriend was a lieutenant on a destroyer off the Philippines. I could have wound up seated on a couch in Frank Sinatra's dressing room at the Paramount Theater. Instead, I put a dagger in my stomach with a pint of the worst rotgut money could buy.

ART BUCHWALD Leaving Home (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1993), pp. 188-189.

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Ballast does not have a budget as such. For nearly 15 years, it has operated at a financial loss. Such losses are currently offset by contributions from enlightened subscribers and generous deductions from the paycheck of the Reader Service Shrimp. If anyone is foolishly philanthropic (foolish because such gifts are surely not tax deductible), we will sometimes accept a check.

Ballast has a collaborative affiliation with Leonardo: Journal of the International Society of Arts, Sciences, and Technology (MIT Press). As a result, some of the book reviews in Ballast are reprinted either on the Leonardo web site at http://mitpress.mit.ed/e-journals/leonardo/home.html or in the printed magazine.

SINCLAIR LEWIS The party sank instantly into a coma.

SHERWOOD
ANDERSON
As he looked
out the car
window the
town of
Winsburg had
disappeared
and his life
had become
but a background on
which to paint
the dreams of
his manhood.

COVER
Collage by
ROY R.
BEHRENS
(1999).

HENRY MILLER My books are the books that I am, the confused man, the negligent man, the reckless man, the lusty, obscene, boisterous, scrupulous, lying, diabolically truthful man that I am.

