

This approach is brilliantly demonstrated by Antoine Picon's analysis of the free-standing column in the 18th century. This object, a historical "monster" coming after the Renaissance pilaster and preceding modern "iron-and-steel" architecture, is first interpreted in a "symbolic," that is, Panofskyan, perspective (the object as "reflection" or "double" of a given culture, in this case the fascination of a twofold heritage: Greek harmony and Gothic lightness, the first reflecting monarchical prestige, the latter suggesting the growing influence of the new classes) before this reading is contested by the study of competing, often contradictory historical influences and discourses (the claim of utility, the need of circulation, the desire of visibility, the seduction of the sublime, the longing for scale) and replaced by a new interpretation, by Picon himself, who discovers in the very contradictions displayed by the free-standing column the symptom of the emerging split between structure and ornament, architecture and art, science and technology.

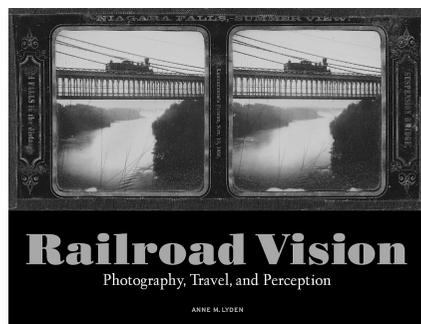
In short, *Things That Talk* is not only a book that will provide the reader with many and marvelous *leçons de choses*, but also a publication that will change the reader's very feelings about what an object may be.

RAILROAD VISION: PHOTOGRAPHY, TRAVEL, AND VISION

by Anne M. Lyden. Getty Publications, Los Angeles, CA, U.S.A., 2003. 180 pp., illus. Trade. ISBN: 0-89236-726-1.

Reviewed by George Shortess, Department of Psychology, Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA, U.S.A. E-mail: <george.shortess@lehigh.edu>.

This book is a very handsomely produced volume that is based on an exhibition of photographs at the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2002. The wonderful



images are taken mainly from the museum collection and include ones from both the 19th and 20th centuries. The text provides an excellent outline of the histories of both the railroads and photography and the ways in which they were used together. For example, in order to promote rail travel, the railroad companies hired photographers to make images promoting exotic destinations and the engineering marvels associated with railroad construction. This is all a fascinating story, one very well presented in the book.

I was, however, intrigued by the title of the book, *Railroad Vision*. The author, Anne Lyden, did not choose something like "A History of Railroads and Photography." Is there something special about the work that can only be captured by the title *Railroad Vision*? In the introduction Lyden describes railroad vision as not only the "social history of railroads as documented through photography" but also a "distinct way of looking at the world." But what is this distinct way and how is it reflected in the photographs?

She begins by pointing out that with the introduction of the railroad, much greater speeds were possible than by previous means of transportation, such as the stagecoach. This situation resulted in a rapid sequence of images and greater differences in apparent speed of movement of near and far objects as a train moved along. These effects, of course, could not be captured directly in still photographs.

However, Lyden feels that other effects that define railroad vision can be seen in the images of the book. For instance, because one could sit in some comfort in the train, there was a greater sense of framing. This experience also resulted in a certain amount of detachment from the environment created by being in the railroad car.

There was an enhanced feeling of the observer looking at the world out there. Ever since perspective became a framework for painting in the Renaissance, this idea of looking out on the world through a window has been a dominant idea in the Western worldview. With the advent of the railroad, this view was available to all in a more compelling and immediate way. This is further enhanced by the use of the stereoscope to present more realistic views. Some stereoscopic images of railroads are included in the book.

Other related ideas are developed. The railroads created a smaller world. Places that were far away now became

accessible. This was accomplished through the conquering and the domination of the natural environment by the railroads. The railroads, as human inventions, took on a kind of hero status and were glorified as triumphs of human intellect and ingenuity.

All of these ideas are, to some extent at least, exemplified in the photographs of and about the railroads in the book. The title *Railroad Vision*, however, suggests that these ideas are unique to railroads. But similar discussions could be developed for other inventions, such as the car and the airplane. They were also heralded as revolutionary and glorified in photography. So none of these characteristics seem unique to railroads, although railroads did come first.

A quite different approach to some of these issues was taken by Sara Danius in her book *The Senses of Modernism*, reviewed in *Leonardo* [1]. She discusses how certain literary texts can be used to understand some of the changes in perception that were related to technological change in the 19th and 20th centuries. I think the visual material from *Railroad Vision* also can be used to help understand larger questions of perceptual change. A study for another exhibition and book would be a comparison of photographs of and taken from cars, railroads and airplanes, for example.

In summary, the book is a valuable addition to the literature on railroad history, and a visual delight. However, I think the title implies a uniqueness of vision that is not apparent. The material would be better presented as part of a larger picture of modern perceptual change.

Reference

1. George Shortess, Review of *The Senses of Modernism: Technology, Perception and Aesthetics*, *Leonardo* 36, No. 5, 415–416 (2003).

KAZUO OHNO'S WORLD: FROM WITHOUT AND WITHIN

by Kazuo Ohno and Yoshito Ohno. John Barrett, trans. Wesleyan Univ. Press, Middletown, CT, U.S.A., 2004. 323 pp. Trade. ISBN: 0-8195-6694-2.

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Butoh means to meander . . . to move in twists and turns between the realms of the living and the dead.

—Kazuo Ohno (p. 205)

Who is Kazuo Ohno? What has he to say about dance, the body, gesture, performance, thought, memory, the soul, death, freedom and love? How has our experience of the body changed as a result of our encounter with Butoh, which he, along with Tatsumi Hijikata, created?

These are the questions that animate this book on an exceptional man, who in 1977 at the age of 71, with his *Admiring La Argentina*, would soon become an essential force in dance internationally—after a hiatus in public performance of nearly a decade.

Written and compiled by his son and closest collaborator, Yoshito Ohno, this book is recommended to those who wish to understand something more of what it is hoped they have viewed on stage. For performers and creators, the book will return them to their initial reasons for having launched themselves into art and enable them to clarify what sustains them and why. Its effects, like those that stem from Artaud's writings, I believe, will grow in importance as Butoh diffuses through studios and schools and its origins in crisis become more historical than immediate.

The book has two sections in two voices. Yoshito Ohno writes the first, "Food for the Soul," in response to 129 photos of his father's dance creations, many never published before. He pays particular attention to the face, mouth, voice, eyes, ear, hand and back, then turns to the language of performance by discussing falling, standing, walls, fluidity, makeup, integrating photo documentation into the dance creation process and more. A biography of Kazuo Ohno's family life, his nine-year service in the Japanese army with its traumatic World War II conclusion in New Guinea, his sudden impulses during curtain calls and his epochal meeting with Tatsumi Hijikata in 1954 follows.

Part Two includes 154 aphorisms transcribed from recordings made during Kazuo Ohno's workshops at his rehearsal studio, which he built with timber donated from a school where he worked. Twenty-four photos accompany the text. Kazuo Ohno speaks of many things, of course, from the common challenges we face in daily life to his relationship with flowers, insects and animals, and the dancer's responsibilities in performance. He tells us:

Discard whatever mental fantasies and ideas you may have. Don't think about where to place your feet. Forget all that, and follow your impulses Be spon-

aneous. How could words ever explain how to move? Just do it. I want dance to spring from an inexplicable source I want to dance in such a way that deeply touches you (p. 221).

And he notes, humorously:

There's no need to memorize gestures and movements because, no matter what I do, I'll forget them anyway. The essential thing is that the experience remains perfectly ingrained in my mind, in my soul. That's what comes with repeated practice. It's of little consequence if I forget what I practice because, despite myself, I'm constantly absorbing the fruit of my endeavors (p. 273).

I attended two performances by Kazuo Ohno at the Japan Society in New York: "My Mother," in 1996, and "Requiem for the Twentieth Century," with Yoshito Ohno, in 1999. Performing solo and in duet at the ages of 90 and 92, respectively, is more than admirable. Performing with poignancy, transparency, directness and strength, despite a body in decline, is more than astonishing; it is perfectly human, without condition or qualm. And that is the greatest compliment I can pay to this master of dance, Kazuo Ohno.

Oh, yes: After his 1999 performance in New York, he held a public question-and-answer session with a translator. From that session, I recall two questions and answers as much characteristic of his audience as of him. A New York actress I know asked Ohno how he prepared for a performance, and he replied: "I rise in the morning and drink tea." Another woman asked what he would like for his epitaph. Ohno thought for a long time before responding: "What was the question?"

The book contains two appendices: a chronology of Kazuo Ohno's life and his public performances.

DESERT ISLANDS AND OTHER TEXTS, 1953–1974

by Gilles Deleuze. David Lapoujade, ed. Michael Taormina, trans. Semiotext(e), distributed by MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, U.S.A., 2003. 328 pp., illus. Paper. ISBN: 1-584-35018-0.

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Desert Islands is, at first glance, a collection of essays, reviews, interviews and miscellany from the early to the middle

part of Deleuze's career. Arranged chronologically, the texts include philosophical investigations of Hume, Nietzsche and Bergson, literary reflections (on Rousseau, Jarry and crime novels) and engagements with contemporaries (such as Simondon, Guattari and Foucault). Stopping just after the publication of *Anti-Oedipus*, the collection contains mostly previously untranslated material.

So then, what does one gain from a collection of miscellany, after the dense, thick tomes of *Difference and Repetition* and *The Logic of Sense*? What more can one know about Deleuze's philosophy by reading book reviews, interviews and fragments? In one sense, nothing. A reader looking for insights into *Anti-Oedipus* or other books will be disappointed here. But, at the same time, Deleuze's writing always attempts to de-totalize itself, to insistently and energetically open itself to still other concepts. From this perspective, *Desert Islands* is actually quite significant, and much more than a collection of previously untranslated texts. *Desert Islands* does not contain any neat summaries of Deleuze's major concepts; it does, however, "capture" something of Deleuze's thought: the fleeting, itinerant and errant quality of the concept. In this sense *Desert Islands* does for Deleuze's work what *Dits et Écrits* has done for Foucault, and indeed what the whole of Blanchot's work expresses. *Desert Islands* is not a "themed" collection, or an attempt to gather into a new book—a sort of meta-book—those utterances that have escaped. Rather, it is an attempt to do something extremely difficult: to let the errant quality of thought express itself in something as inclusive and enclosed as a book. Blanchot and Jabès, among others, have noted the tensions inherent in the concept of the "book": it is at once a proliferation of thought and at the same time that which always encloses, expands, encircles. Arguably, Deleuze's thought operates in a similar manner, deterritorializing at the same time that it constructs concepts.

This, of course, makes writing a review somewhat pointless, since one of the tasks of the reviewer is to thematize, summarize or otherwise re-present the work in a way that makes obvious its inherent organization or relevance. This ends up taking *Desert Islands* as a sort of secondary text, a text whose sole function is to be read by the "experienced" Deleuzian scholar or student. Instead, *Desert Islands* would be better