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## Book Reviews -- Monographic Musings

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# Book Reviews — Monographic Musings

Column Editor: **Debbie Vaughn** (Reference Librarian, College of Charleston) <vaughnd@cofc.edu>

**Column Editor's Note:** *Art is to museums as books are to libraries. This analogy could easily come from a standardized test, and, upon first glance, could be considered accurate. There is, however, a wonderful symbiotic relationship between libraries and museums that blurs the definition established in the abovementioned analogy. Our cataloging systems are different and our collections are comprised of diverse media, but visual representations and art are*

*just as meaningful to human civilization as words and books.*

*This month, **Monographic Musings** takes a look at three books that further merge the spheres of fine art and libraries. The new edition of **The Oxford Dictionary of Art** defines elements of art in our culture; **The Atlas of World Art** amalgamates geography, art, and society; and **The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian** presents six articles to help fine-tune art librarianship. Happy reading, everyone! —DV*

while brief and anti-cumbersome, leave the reader with a solid overview of his/her original query. If your library is seeking an updated art reference book and illustrations are not of prime importance, the

**Dictionary of Art** could even possibly provide a cost-friendly alternative to a multi-volume art encyclopedia. This impressive work is suitable for academic, public, and high school libraries.

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**Atlas of World Art.** Onians, John, ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. 0195215834. 352 pages. \$150.00.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)  
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**The Oxford Dictionary of Art**, 3rd ed. Chilvers, Ian, ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. 0198604769. 864 pages. \$45.00.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)  
<vaughnd@cofc.edu>

With the first edition published in 1988 and a subsequent edition in 1997, **The Oxford Dictionary of Art** is an authoritative reference volume that covers art from classical Greece to works created by artists born in or before 1965. Editor **Ian Chilvers** quotes the original editor, **Dr. Dennis Far**, in the preface, claiming that the dictionary "is meant for the layman who needs reliable information in an easily accessible form; it is also designed to be a handy reference book for students and teachers."

The **Dictionary of Art** begins with a classified list of entries arranged by thematic art headings: Ancient and Medieval, Artist Biographies, Other Biographies (such as writers, patrons, and dealers), and Non-Biographical Entries

(such as museums and galleries, academies, movements, and techniques). Entries are arranged alphabetically, "see" references are offered, and "see also" cross-references are preceded by an asterisk. Following the main entries is a chronology of key works and other events—beginning c. 5000 BC and ending in 2003—that has, like most of the book, been expanded since the second edition. **Chilvers'** work concludes with a handy index of galleries and museums.

As dictionaries go, the **Dictionary of Art** is an engaging one. I would not be surprised if researchers seeking one entry read the next few entries out of sheer intellectual curiosity. **Chilvers'** voice is attention-grabbing, and he includes trivia in his entries that,

**The Atlas of World Art**, edited by **John Onians**, is a fascinating hybrid of historical atlas, art history text, and geography lesson, with the slightest dash of hip travel guide. **Onians**, professor of visual arts and director of the **World Art Research Programme** at the **University of East Anglia**, has written two other books on art in the classical world, and the periodical **Art History** bears his name as founding editor.

**The Atlas of World Art** is divided into seven major parts, each based on time period and influences on artistic evolution; each section is then broken down by region. After an overview written by **Onians**, the sections immediately jump into information about regional artistic movements. More than 60 scholars contributed to the narratives that complement the maps, illustrations, and photographs that fill the volume. The book includes a bibliography and thorough 28-page index.

**Onians'** atlas contains a great deal more text than traditional atlases, text which emphasizes the

relationships conveyed in the book's visual components. However, being the visual learner that I am, I believe it is the clear maps, stunning illustrations, beautiful photographs, and overall comprehensible graphic design that make this book the gem that it is. Cheers to cartographic editor **Ailsa Heritage** for insuring that the maps succinctly convey the complex relationship among geography, history, society, technology, and, of course, art.

**The Atlas of World Art** is just as suitable for an academic or public library as it is for your own coffee table. It is a beautiful work of art itself, packed with images of art and architecture, and I would be proud to display it in my home. At the same time, it offers an innovative way for researchers and students to look at the world's art from 40,000 BC to Y2K. The aforementioned components of civilization—geography, history, society, technology, and art—are relevant to a scholar and a layperson alike. If you can fit it into your budget, it is well worth the high price tag.

*continued on page 67*

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## From the Reference Desk from page 64


The **H. W. Wilson Company** has just published the 12th edition of a standard tool for public library collection development and readers' advisory work. The **Public Library Catalog** (2004, 0824209818, \$350) has guided reference librarians and their patrons to quality reference and adult non-fiction books for years. Although it traces its origins to the first installment of the **Standard Catalog - Sociology Section** in 1918, the first full edition was published in 1934 as the **Standard Catalog for Public Libraries**. Later changing its name to the **Public Library Cata-**

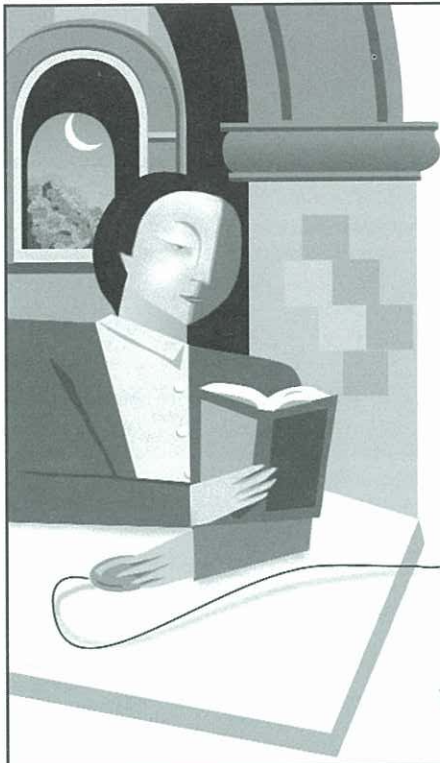
**log**, this work lists English language nonfiction books published in the United States, or published in Canada and the UK but distributed in this country. It is restricted to printed books. Non-print materials are not included, nor are "works that quickly become dated such as computer software guides."

The current edition provides bibliographic information for each of the 8,000 entries, including author, title, publishers, number of pages, price, ISBN as well as excerpts of reviews from publications like **Library Journal** and **Publishers Weekly**. The **Catalog** is divided into two main parts. The first is called the **Classified Catalog** and is arranged by the **Dewey Decimal Classification** number. Within each classification number, titles are arranged alphabetically by author name.

There is an extensive Author, Title, Subject and Analytical Index that refers to the classification number in which the books can be found in the **Classified Catalog**.

Browsing the **Public Library Catalog** reinforces the notion that even in the age of computer access an extensive selective bibliography has a useful role. It is a handy, easy to use tool that librarians will find helpful in selecting titles to bolster their collections as well as making recommendations to their readers on numerous topics of interest.

The list price includes the basic 2004 volume along with a subscription to receive three annual supplements from 2005 to 2007. The **Public Library Catalog** is a necessary purchase for most medium to large public libraries. 



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### Book Reviews from page 66

*The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian.* Wilson, Terrie, ed. New York: Haworth Information Press, 2003. 0789021099. 110 pages. \$24.95.

Reviewed by **Debbie Vaughn** (College of Charleston)  
<vaughnd@cofc.edu>

The Haworth Information Press has once again co-published an issue of one of their journals as a “monographic separate.” In this case, the *Journal of Library Administration* (volume 39, issue number one, 2003) has also been printed as the monograph *The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian*. Editor **Terrie Wilson**, art librarian at the **Michigan State University Fine Arts Library**, is not a stranger to art librarianship literature. Frequently, she has contributed to the bulletin *Art Documentation*, and she has also reviewed a number of books for *ARBA* and *Choice*. In addition, **Wilson** is an involved and committed member of the **Art Libraries Society of North America**.


*The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian* is divided into three major sections that cover professionalism, collection management, and library practices; each section contains two articles that span a broad spectrum of interests. The first section, “The Art Library Profes-

sional,” begins with **Clemson University** architecture librarian **Sarah McCleskey’s** investigation into staffing standards and core competencies in academic art and architecture departmental libraries. In the following article, veteran museum librarian **Joan Benedetti** discusses the challenges of managing a small art museum library. The second section, “Managing and Servicing Collections in an Art and Architecture Environment,” covers digital library development as well as branch library special collections management.

**OCLC Digital Project Specialist Paula Hardin** reviews several issues involved in implementing a digitization project into standard library operations. **Janine Jacqueline Henri**, Head Librarian of the Architecture and Planning branch library at the **University of Texas** at Austin, explores the many facets of special collections in her library; **Henri** discusses everything from public ser-



vices to facilities planning. The final section, “The Big Picture: Comparing Practices in Art Libraries,” looks at facilities, access issues, digitization efforts, acquisitions matters, and other issues in art libraries, art museum libraries, and architecture libraries. **Emory University** Art History Librarian **Kim Collins** gives a general comparison of academic art libraries and art museum libraries. **Susan Craig**, head of the Murphy Art and Architecture Library at the **University of Kansas**, surveyed over 160 North American art and architecture libraries regarding current practices; her study is a rich source of information for art and architecture librarians to gauge their own policies and services in light of those of other libraries.

*The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian* offers a wealth of information concerning the plethora of issues that are faced by library professionals in a specialized field. Certainly practicing art librarians will benefit from the material presented by the six contributing authors. In addition, as **Wilson** states in her preface, the articles will also “provide non-art librarians the chance to understand some of the issues faced by art library administrators.” *The Twenty-First Century Art Librarian* is appropriate for art or architecture libraries and librarians, as well as libraries with substantial art or architecture collections. 

## Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

### Preconferences and Vendor Showcase Main Conference

	Preconferences and Vendor Showcase	Main Conference
2005	2 November	3-5 November
2006	8 November	9-11 November
2007	7 November	8-10 November
2008	5 November	6-8 November
2009	4 November	5-7 November