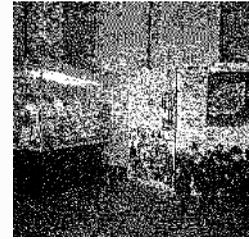


“The Assemblage of Specimens”: The Magazine as Catalogue in 1970s Britain

Article by Samuel Bibby

WORD COUNT:13,653



Abstract

In 1976, the Victoria and Albert Museum staged an exhibition dedicated to the history of art periodicals since their inception at the end of the eighteenth century. While a conventional catalogue was discussed in the early stages of the exhibition’s development, it never came to pass, seemingly due to financial limitations. Independently of the museum, however, the exhibition’s guest curators, Trevor Fawcett and Clive Phillpot, published concurrently with the show a balanced collection of essays, modestly described as “background reading”. But the exhibition was also bracketed by the appearance that year of special issues of two British art magazines dedicated to its theme: *The Connoisseur*; and *Studio International*. The former, conceived at the suggestion of V&A director Roy Strong, proclaimed to be an “alternative catalogue”, providing somewhat simplistic, historiographical, illustrated surveys of titles such as *Apollo* and *The Burlington Magazine*. The latter, by contrast, comprised contributions in a number of different formats, both in terms of genre of writing as well as mode of visual expression. These included, for example, what was termed a “reprographic documentation”, an intervention through which, as its abstract stated, “the use of the exhibition catalogue and the art magazine as exhibition spaces emerges”. This essay examines these three publications alongside each other, and in the absence of an official catalogue, in order to consider the status of the magazine as a key site for art-historical innovation and experimentation in the wider context of the discipline and its exhibition practices in 1970s Britain.

*Catalogues, posters, advertisements of all sorts. Believe me, they contain the poetry of our epoch.*¹

(Guillaume Apollinaire, 1912)

*Now people do not live by encyclopaedias but by newspapers, magazines, card catalogues, prospectuses, and dictionaries.*²

(Aleksandr Rodchenko, 1928)

*The magazine is a vitrine and a poster.*³

(Guillermo de Torre, 1928)

“A visual narrative in photographic form”

Early in 1976, the Victoria and Albert Museum issued a press release announcing their forthcoming exhibition, *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines* (fig. 1). Having outlined the interest and importance of the show’s subject matter, it closed with the following passage which gives some sense of how the exhibition was organised, in terms of both content and form: “The exhibition ... has as its main part a visual narrative in photographic form, to show the development of art magazines over the past two hundred years. It presents,” it went on, “a portrait gallery of the periodicals ... together with the personalities involved, and some glimpses of background atmosphere. There are three sections: a general history, a review of art historical scholarship in periodicals; and a survey of magazines of modern art movements. Some periodicals,” the statement ended, “will be displayed in showcases, and issues of current periodicals will be available for browsing in a reading area in the exhibition.”⁴ At the heart of this exhibition, as the press release had put it, was the “visual narrative in photographic form”, a series of fifty-one large screens replete with information, both visual and verbal, as can be seen from surviving installation photos, for example, the panels dedicated to Romanticism from the section “The Evolution of Art Magazines” covering periodicals such as *L’Artiste* and *Les Beaux-Arts* (fig. 2); a series of panels addressing *The Burlington Magazine* complete with Roger Fry lounging in an armchair from the section “Scholarship in Art Magazines” (fig. 3); and, from the section “Magazines of Modern Art Movements”, panels focusing on Dada and Surrealism—including well-known magazines such as *391* and *Minotaure*—alongside a vitrine containing a display of material relating to Dadaist publications (fig. 4). “We imagined our visitor,” one of the curators would write some time later, “as a man standing in front of a magazine stall, in front of a wall of magazines such as is seen in the first unit of the exhibition (fig. 5).⁵ And we decided, consequently, that the exhibition should take the form of vertical panels”.⁶



Figure 4

The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines, 1976, installation photograph. Collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum Archive, London (GF3112, 1976). Digital image courtesy of the Victoria & Albert Museum, London.



Figure 5

Martina Margetts, "200 Years of The Art Press", *Arts Review*, 28, no. 9 (30 April 1976): 211. .

Just as installation photographs record for posterity exhibitions, so too, of course, in their own way do exhibition catalogues. Yet given that the bulk of this particular exhibition was constituted of the texts and photographic reproductions of such page-like panels—exactly the kind of material that usually finds a place in an exhibition catalogue—it is only reasonable to wonder what form any such publication might have taken: mere facsimiles of these panels, or something altogether different? Indeed, just such a question had been the concern of the organisers of *The Art Press* from its very inception, and shall be my focus in this essay: exactly how were the “contents and intellectual thrust” of this show, as one definition of exhibition catalogues terms it, variously documented?⁷ I say variously for, as will become apparent, the show was catalogued in more ways than one, and I am interested more broadly in what these different “catalogues” might in turn suggest about the status and role of what they were recording, the art magazine in Britain during the 1970s.⁸ Such questions are surely still just as pertinent, if not more, some forty years later in the era of digital publishing, when precisely how and of what a magazine is constituted remain subjects for both debate and development.

“A unique historiographical object and lens”

Two current strands of art-historical activity underpin my endeavour. The first is the dramatic growth in recent years of what might be termed “periodical studies”, an avenue of enquiry, in the words of Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, intent on no longer seeing “magazines merely as containers of discrete bits of information rather than autonomous objects of study.”⁹ The second is the parallel rise in focus on, and theorisation of, art, and in particular artists’, magazines. Writing in a recent anthology of such material, Gwen Allen has suggested that: “art historians and curators have begun to recognize the importance of the magazine as a unique

historiographical object and lens, and a site for exhibition-making.”¹⁰ In both instances, what might be considered art-historical knowledge can be seen as not simply textual discourse but rather a set of objects that similarly demand attention in terms of their visual and material natures. Too many accounts of the discipline have let such qualities languish in subservience to written content, reinforcing hierarchies of meaning not just within art history, but also its historiography.¹¹ By privileging the visuality and materiality of publications, my intention is to emphasise them as active agents in the making of art-historical meaning, as opposed to functioning as mere documents of the past.

In addition to drawing upon such models, I am equally indebted to the framework of historical enquiry offered by Walter Benjamin’s metaphors of excavation and its relationship to memory. By approaching printed matter archaeologically, the art history that it constitutes—“the strata which yield their long-sought secrets only to the most meticulous investigation”—can be uncovered for the purposes of historiographical consideration.¹² Such an approach, appropriately enough, is all the more apposite given the specific physical nature of the historical material in question; seeing magazines as layered, serial accumulations, both of pages and issues, is a phenomenon adopted by many of the protagonists in the history that I chart here. Likewise, my own visualisation of magazines as strata is a concept that runs through this essay like something of a geological seam. Through an excavation of the various publications generated by *The Art Press*, I seek to unearth the discipline of art history as itself a site of enquiry warranting visual and material self-reflexivity.

“A thing in its own right”

Since its earliest days, publishing was evidently integral to the V&A’s endeavours.¹³ “The museum will be like a book”, its first director, Henry Cole, would write in 1857, “with its pages always open”.¹⁴ Well over a century later, writing in his diary shortly after having taken the museum’s helm in 1974, Roy Strong proclaimed: “I want provocative exhibitions ... happenings in the quadrangle ... huge catalogues to appear, publications to take off...”.¹⁵ Before turning to magazines and the detailed case study of *The Art Press*, the exhibition catalogue as a category of art-historical writing (not to mention object of enquiry) merits a little scrutiny. Despite their ubiquity, historiographical literature dedicated to this form of publication remains sparse.¹⁶ Typical treatments, such as that from 1985 by Peter Cannon-Brookes, present broad developmental narratives in which as a type they emerge in the form of simple, exclusively textual checklists in relation to the academies and salons of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Western Europe, “easily carried around the exhibition and serving afterwards as only an aide-memoire.”¹⁷ Such accounts usually pinpoint the turn of the twentieth century as a watershed, with the appearance of lavishly illustrated commemorative volumes produced by the Burlington Fine Arts Club to record their exhibitions in printed form. As the practices (and economics) of exhibition-making evolved, so too did the catalogues associated with them; the sophistication of art-historical research to be mediated led, by the 1960s and 1970s, to “an increasing independence of the exhibition catalogue from the exhibition which it ostensibly served.” “The logical conclusion for this line of development,” Cannon-Brookes suggested, “has been the abandonment of the exhibition catalogue entirely and its replacement by a book devoted to the subject which can be sold in it and elsewhere.”¹⁸ Such a shift, aside from financial considerations, seems to have been precipitated by the changing nature of what was actually being displayed in the exhibitions, as well as how. *The Destruction of the Country House*, which opened at the V&A in 1974, for instance, was comprised almost entirely of photographic

material. Writing in its accompanying publication, Roy Strong made clear that the design of the exhibition had “helped to shape” the book that went with it, as a photographic collage of furniture from the museum’s collection perhaps attests, seemingly laid out on a double-page spread to resemble such items arranged within the display space of an exhibition gallery (fig. 6).¹⁹



Figure 6

Roy Strong, Marcus Binney, and John Harris, *The Destruction of the Country House, 1875–1975*, (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), 152–153. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

This change of emphasis was indeed noted by Anthony Burton in his entry on exhibition catalogues for the 1977 *Art Library Manual: A Guide to Resources and Practice*, published by the Art Libraries Society (ARLIS). “When exhibitions consisted simply of a hodge-podge of things,” he explained, “the catalogue provided a record and commentary. Now that designers have a large hand in exhibitions, the things sometimes take a second place; exhibitions become their own commentary; and traditional catalogues become inappropriate. Some exhibitions,” Burton continued, “do without things at all and take the form of happenings or ideas. If any publications are produced to accompany such exhibitions, they escape from the normal category of exhibition catalogues. Sometimes,” he concluded, “an exhibition catalogue becomes a thing in its own right.”²⁰ The autonomy to which Burton gestures here is of particular importance, and his observation that exhibitions might take the form of ideas should prompt us to consider the implications that conceptual art was having on the exhibition catalogue. At the forefront of the picture was the figure of Seth Siegelaub, self-styled dealer, publisher, and curator-at-large. “Until 1967, the problems of exhibition of art were quite clear,” Siegelaub would explain in an interview with Charles Harrison, published in the magazine *Studio International* in December 1969, “because at that time the ‘art’ of art and the ‘presentation’ of art were coincident.” Siegelaub went on to outline the emergence of work, as he put it, “not visual in nature”, in other words conceptual art, and its ramifications for modes of display, both on the walls of galleries and the pages of publications. Having decried the inability of photography and art criticism to convey painting and sculpture objectively, he observed that “when art concerns itself with things not germane to physical presence, its intrinsic (communicative) value is not altered by its presentation in printed media.”²¹ In a key statement, Siegelaub then set out a distinction which can be seen among the publications to emerge from South Kensington the following decade: *The use of catalogues and books to communicate (and disseminate) art is the most neutral means to present the new art. The catalogue can now act as primary information for the*

exhibition, as opposed to secondary information about art in magazines, catalogues, etc., and in some cases the “exhibition” can be the “catalogue”.²²

Indeed, in the very same periodical the following year, Siegelau guest-edited an entire issue given over to just such primary information, a forty-eight-page exhibition which collapsed the spaces of art gallery and catalogue into a single object reproduced in the multiple format of the art magazine (fig. 7).²³ As the critic Gregory Battcock, writing on the role of documentation in conceptual art, would pithily proclaim: “There are no more reproductions. There is no more criticism. No more aesthetics. Only art.”²⁴ The straightforward linear narrative of the development of exhibition catalogues had been disrupted; the effects of this realignment would be borne out, as we shall see, among the differing catalogues engendered by *The Art Press*. What is more, these various outcomes would surely have gone on to inform the subsequent picture seen above by Anthony Burton, whose own involvement with the V&A exhibition likely underpinned his account of this type of publication for fellow librarians the following year.

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Studio International incorporating "The Studio" Founded 1893 | July/August 1970 | Volume 180 Number 924 |
| | For a US emergency cultural government | Notes by Beth Gofelt II |
| | A Soviet view of Charlotte Moorman and the avant garde | Mike Stammel III |
| | Correspondence | IV |
| | News and Notes | V |
| | Technology and art job | Jonathan Kravitt VII |
| Editors: Peter Evans and Annette Selzer (United Kingdom) Executive Editors: Richard Doherty Art Editor: Malcolm Lander Advertisement Manager: Vivian Witt Advertising Director: Dore Ashton (New York) New York Office: Frank Whiffled London Office: Editorial Advisory Committee: J.P. Mohr (Harcourt Brace) Alan Bowness Alec Farago David Thompson International Advisory Panel: American: John Auerbach Asiatic: George Baker European: Herbert Bayer Brazil: Maria Helena Canada: David Shaw France: Jacques Lacombe Germany: Dr. Walter Schindler Holland: Jan van Marrewijk Japan: Shigeo Fukuda Scandinavia: Carl Gustaf Spain: Alejandro Portuondo Switzerland: The Club de Genève-Visuelle UK: Thomas M. Messer USA: J.J. Slocum Argentina: Adolfo C. Cabrerizo | The issue of "The Studio" is a special double issue, published in July/August 1970. It contains 48 pages of text and 100 illustrations. The text is written by a group of international artists and critics, and is devoted to the work of Charlotte Moorman, a leading figure in the avant-garde movement. The illustrations are by various artists, including Moorman herself. The issue is a significant contribution to the study of contemporary art and is highly recommended to all those interested in the field. | |
| | David Anin 1 Dora Gordian 1 Harold Cohen 2 John Baldessari 3 Marcel Broda 4 Eliasse Azria 5 Deed Lousier 6 Laurie R. King 7 Kurt Schwitters 8 Gerrit Neuhaus 9 Alighiero Boetti 10 Eugene Ionesco 11 Maurice Béjart 12 Luisa Perdomo 13 Emilio Prini 14 Enrico 15 Liliana Zucchi 16 Michele Clavel 17 David Buren 17 | Charles Harrison Kevin Meehan 25 Tony Harrison David Batchelor Michael Radelet 26 Harold Hurwitz 28 Victor Burgin 29 Barry Haganan 30 Joseph Kosuth 30 John Leitham 31 Renzo Lussu 32 Roy R. Lyford Robert Barry 33 Stephen Baskin Smith 34 Lawrence Weiner 35 On Kawara 36 Sol LeWitt 37 Hanses Haeberle 38 N.E. Thing Co. 39 Teresa Borja 40 Hans Baldus Eva Doherty 41 Harum Darboven 45 |
| | Supplement: new and recent art books | Reviews by Andrew Forge, Vita Illies, John Elderfeldt, Anthony Friedberg, George Muir, Markert Lynton, Christopher Lasch, Ronald Knox, Paul Oliver, Howard Decker, Frank Whiffled and Jonathan Bickell |

Figure 7
Studio International, 180, no. 924 (July/August 1970):
contents page, non-paginated. Digital image courtesy
of Samuel Bibby.

“The still scanty literature of art periodicals”

As the exhibition’s organisers put it, *The Art Press* represented “a first attempt to consider the art periodical as a genre and as a significant factor in the development of art and its understanding”; they could confidently refer, for example, to “the still scanty literature of art periodicals”.²⁵ To set the stage, it is worth a fleeting look at the historiographical landscape in the years immediately preceding the V&A exhibition and its associated publications, to gain some brief sense of how, if at all, people had gone about addressing such a topic. Perhaps the first to do so was Stanley T. Lewis, an assistant librarian at Queens College in New York. In an article titled “Periodicals in the Visual Arts”, published in 1962 in the journal *Library Trends*, Lewis approached the matter bibliographically, very much from the (quantitative) perspective of his own profession (fig. 8). Accordingly, his twenty-three-page essay — while offering a valuable

overview, replete with information covering titles with varied focus, from a range of countries, and looking back as far as the beginning of the twentieth century—reproduces, for example, no images of periodicals whatsoever.²⁶ Just over a decade later, the American magazine *Artforum* would publish a handful of contributions in this same area. Here, however, the context was much more specific; Lawrence Alloway's pair of articles from 1974, "Artists as Writers", was intent on providing historical background for the contemporary linguistic practices of conceptual artists, so often inextricably linked to the medium of the magazine itself, as will be shown below, as well as to the related field of artists' books.²⁷ Later the same year, there appeared a survey of art magazines published outside New York since 1970, written by Alan Moore, titled "New Voices".²⁸ Indeed, the focus was less on the magazines themselves than on challenging the stronghold of New York within the sphere of contemporary art. Meanwhile, a handful of titles from the beginning of the century—*Jugend*, *Ver Sacrum*, *Der Sturm*, *Pan*, and *Lacerba*, for example—had variously been treated in a range of anthologies and facsimile editions, but all only individually. My overarching point here, perhaps not unsurprisingly, is that any attention that the topic of art periodicals had received was sporadic, often tangential, or highly specialised in focus.²⁹ Those organising the V&A exhibition had landed on fertile territory, and moreover had precious little precedent when it came to conceiving how the exhibition itself, not to mention its documentation, might take form.

The Art Press followed on the heels of a series of exhibitions put on by the V&A concentrating on Hector Berlioz, Charles Dickens, and Lord Byron—all of which presented challenges in terms of both display and documentation, principally owing to the predominance of textual material that needed to be included. The catalogue for the last of these, programmed to coincide with the 150th anniversary in 1974 of Byron's death, is indicative of the museum's approach. Substantial, totalling 184 pages of text and eighty-nine separately reproduced plates, the publication went into great detail, including, for example, a map of the exhibition, which culminated in a reading area—a feature to be duplicated by *The Art Press*—where visitors could consult copies of current literature on the poet. As the director's foreword explained, "The composition of the sections into which the exhibition is divided is succinctly described in the Short Guide to the Exhibition by Jonathan Mayne, which, issued separately, is reprinted as an Introduction to this catalogue."³⁰ Following this, each section of the exhibition was covered in an individual chapter, including an introductory text together with individual catalogue entries for every item on display (fig. 9). The foreword's closing passage makes abundantly clear this publication's status: "The catalogue has been written by John Murdoch and Anthony Burton", it explained. "Through their labours the exhibition will leave a permanent contribution to Byron Studies."³¹ It can be discerned, then, that the V&A placed significant importance during the first half of the 1970s on different types of publication associated with exhibitions in their programme; this state of affairs, however, would not continue across the board.

Periodicals in the Visual Arts

STANLEY T. LEWIS

TODAY'S TRENDS IN ART PERIODICALS in the United States must be viewed in the context of general cultural post-war directions. These directions can be characterized as (1) a more inclusive definition of the sphere of art activity, (2) a new and broader art market, (3) an internationalism of approach, (4) the widespread acceptance and appreciation of contemporary forms, and (5) the emphasis upon visual communication. Each of these tendencies is having a profound effect upon the publishing of art periodicals, which in their short history have never responded to a more exciting and challenging milieu.

The twentieth century has witnessed the breakdown in traditional concepts of art media and their relative importance. This began with the cubists' collage technique, in which elements of outer physical reality, such as newspaper clippings, were pasted on the canvas, and with the Dadaists' "ready-made" and the surrealists' *objet trouvé*, both being complete objects found and used by the artist "as is." Calder's mobiles are universally familiar, but more recent trends go further in destroying traditional concepts of what sculpture is: Yves Klein's "Sculpture de Feu Bleu," exhibited in 1961 at the entrance to the Krefeld Museum in Germany, consisted of "a high-powered, brilliant jet of blue-colored gas projected from a specially constructed pipeline."¹ Recent theorists have attacked the idea of the "fine" arts altogether. A. T. Schoener, for example, states that art should be created for use by people and not exclusively for display in museums: "The reactionary artist of our day is the man who is restricted to communicating his personal feelings, or maybe not even communicating anything at all, through the medium of paint and brushes."² This change in thinking is reflected on the title pages of the H. W. Wilson Company's *Art Index*. The first volume, covering January 1929 through

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[330]

Figure 8

Stanley T. Lewis, "Periodicals in the Visual Arts", *Library Trends*, 10, no. 3 (Winter 1962): 330. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Byron among Mount Blizioti and Spargos, The Phoros

Byron among Mount Blizioti and Spargos, The Phoros

Byron among Mount Blizioti and Spargos, The Phoros

Figure 9

John Murdoch and Anthony Burton (eds.), *Byron: An Exhibition to Commemorate the 150th Anniversary of His Death in the Greek War of Liberation, 19 April 1824*, (London: HMSO, 1974), 52–53. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“Rather like a single issue of an illustrated periodical”

The exhibition had been proposed by ARLIS and the idea of a catalogue for it was on the agenda from the fore. Its progress can be charted through the wealth of correspondence concerning *The Art Press* that the V&A retains in its archive, for much of it is particularly revealing. In his first letter to the museum about the project at the end of 1973, their chairman, the UEA Librarian Trevor Fawcett, stressed: “It would be particularly important to have a well-researched catalogue of permanent value. Virtually nothing has been written on the theme of the art periodical and its wider significance.”³² The V&A agreed to take on the idea and Anthony Burton, an assistant keeper in the National Art Library, was assigned to the project. Writing to Fawcett in the spring of 1974, Burton mirrored the desire for something of posterity: “the catalogue might most appropriately be made a commentary, rather than an annotated list of exhibits. It will then have value as a separate publication apart from the exhibition.”³³ And later that year, he explained in an internal memo to a colleague:

*It is envisaged it will not be a catalogue of exhibits, but a commentary on the exhibition following up in greater detail points which will have to be put across very concisely in the display. It will probably take the form of a series of short articles by various hands. As yet we have no clear ideas about it.*³⁴

By the beginning of 1975, however, ideas were certainly becoming clearer and the fate of the publication took a key turn as a letter from Burton to the recently arrived director of the museum, Roy Strong, makes clear. I quote this at some length for it is precisely the point at which the importance of just what form the catalogue might eventually take really begins to emerge.

We hope to produce a booklet to accompany the exhibition. This cannot be a catalogue, since the meaning of the exhibition will not lie in individual exhibits, but in the shape and message we impose on the subject. The message will be conveyed in punchy and compressed form on the screens, and we do not wish simply to reproduce their contents in the book. We should like to produce a gathering of illustrated essays, dealing in somewhat greater depth with some of the chief aspects of the subject.

The result would, perhaps, be rather like a single issue of an illustrated periodical: and we might stress the resemblance if this seems appropriate. In physical bulk, I should envisage the *Magazine of the Exhibition* as not less substantial than an issue of (say) *History Today* (fig. 10), not more substantial than an issue of (say) *The Connoisseur* (fig. 11): preferably somewhere in between.³⁵

This marks the first moment that the catalogue was thought of as a magazine (rather than a book). As I have argued elsewhere, conceiving new periodicals specifically in relation to other existing titles in their field—situating them within the “periodical landscape”, as I have termed it—is just how they begin.³⁶ It is all the more apt too in this case for the emergence of both the exhibition catalogue and the art periodical had gone hand in hand with the appearance in the eighteenth century of printed pamphlets listing the contents of salon exhibitions—indeed, I even wonder if this had been at the back of Burton’s mind when making the suggestion. It is also worth recalling at this juncture that the amalgamation of catalogue and magazine would appear elsewhere in the period immediately running up to the V&A exhibition; to accompany their 1975 retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in Oxford, the collective Art & Language produced a publication consciously mirroring the exact form of their own periodical, *Art-Language*, itself a key site for their practice (fig. 12).³⁷ The strategies of conceptual art with which this group of artists, and this publication, engaged, however, were certainly not to underpin the outcome of Burton’s proposition, although they do foresee the alternative efforts to which I will later turn.

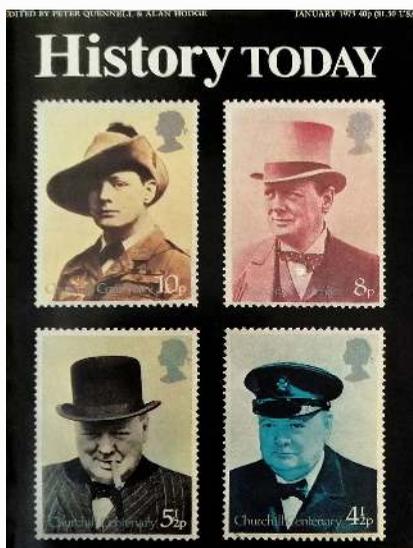


Figure 10
History Today, 25, no.1 (January 1975): front cover. Digital image courtesy of History Today.

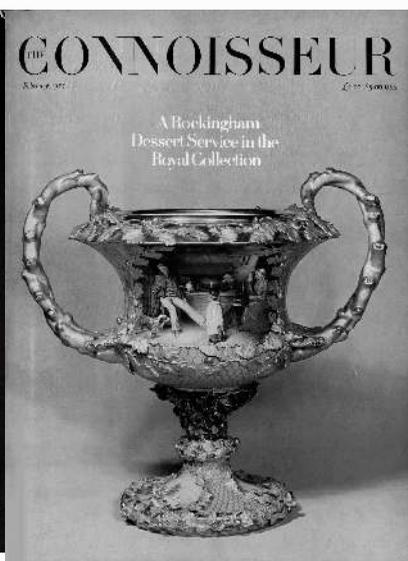


Figure 11
The Connoisseur, 188, no. 756 (February 1975): front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

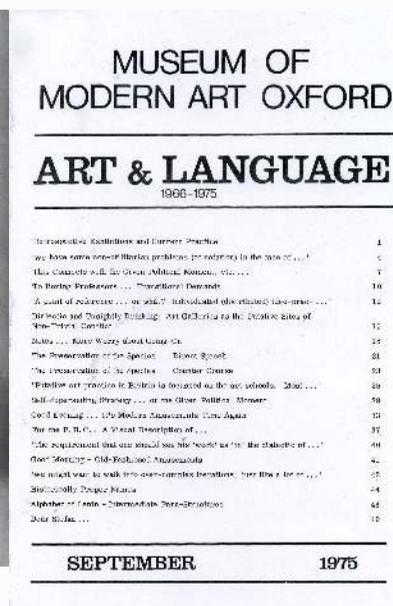


Figure 12
Art & Language, Art & Language, 1966–1975, (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1975), front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“Other ways of publishing the material”

Roy Strong was evidently very taken with such a conflation and wrote on the following day to none other than Bevis Hillier, editor of *The Connoisseur*, with whom he was already working on an exhibition to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Festival of Britain. “It occurred to me,” Strong mused, having outlined the premise of the ARLIS show, “that this was an ideal subject for an issue of *The Connoisseur* which could also act as a souvenir ‘catalogue’ of the exhibition.”³⁸ Burton, it should be underlined, had stressed merely similarity of format — “bulk” and “substance” as he had put it — rather than any wholesale dispatch from the realm of museum publication to the framework of an existing magazine, complete with its own identity — both of form and content — seized upon by Strong. Hillier clearly jumped at the opportunity and enthusiastically accepted within a matter of days, noting for him the happy coincidence of the exhibition’s opening with his magazine’s seventy-fifth anniversary.³⁹ Burton, meanwhile, was left to break the news to ARLIS. “It seems that as a result of economic difficulties, paper shortage, etc.,” he wrote, “the Director is having to be stricter in the selection of catalogues to put forward to the Stationary Office. While he likes the idea of the Art Periodicals exhibition he does not think that the catalogue — or rather, background booklet — is likely to be a best-seller”. “At this stage”, he continued, “when we still have plenty of time for forward planning, the Director is anxious to investigate other ways of publishing the material which we would have used in the booklet. He suggests that since the exhibition is concerned with periodicals, it might be appropriate to publish the background essays in a special issue of an art periodical, if we could persuade a periodical to take this on. He mentioned several art and

bibliographical periodicals to me, and it seemed that *The Connoisseur* might be the most suitable.”⁴⁰

This suggestion did not go down well with ARLIS, as Burton conveyed to Strong a few months later.

*[They] have found a commercial publisher ... who will publish for them the kind of catalogue they think the exhibition ought to have, i.e. a survey of the whole subject with copious bibliographical information (35,000 words, modest illustrations, £2 or so). Mr Hillier's plans for The Connoisseur are different. He wants something racier.*⁴¹

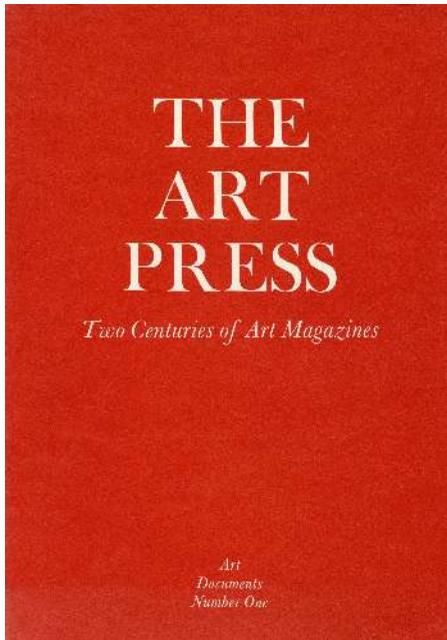


Figure 13

Trevor Fawcett and Clive Phillpot (eds.), *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*, (London: The Art Book Company, 1976), front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

And thus it was that ARLIS published independently their collection of essays, “background reading”, as its opening words described the volume (fig. 13).⁴² Meanwhile, Burton drafted a letter for Strong to send to Hillier, letting him know ARLIS’s plans. “The museum itself,” they added, “will probably produce a very modest pamphlet, as it is now our policy to produce a cheap ‘official’ utterance. The advantage of the present arrangement,” they went on, “is that you can go ahead and produce an issue of *The Connoisseur* exactly as you want it, without any of the inhibitions that affect an official statement.”⁴³ And as it would transpire, no official statement — beyond the press release — was actually ever made: the “modest pamphlet” of which they wrote did not come to pass; and, tellingly, the ARLIS catalogue lacked the preface from the museum’s director that one would expect. Instead, both iterations of the catalogue were sold side by side in the V&A shop, neither making reference to the other, but both vying for the attention — and investment — of visitors to

the exhibition.

“The most exclusive sector of the magazine market”

Given that *The Connoisseur* was then owned by commercial publishers The National Magazine Company, it is surely no surprise that additional emphasis was placed on sales of the title beyond the museum, but if an article heralding the special number in an issue of trade magazine *Retail Newsagent, Tobacconist and Confectioner* from the middle of February that year is anything to go by, they were clearly pulling out all of the stops (fig. 14). And rather than foregrounding the visuality of the news-stand, as the exhibition panels sought to, focus was instead placed on the profits that it could bring. In his regular column, “Looking Round Publishing Doors”, industry expert Howard Fox proclaimed: “There is a unique opportunity now for you to break into the most exclusive sector of the magazine market. If you manage it,” he went on, “a high rate of profit per copy will result — and nobody in the newsagency business can afford to let that slide by!”⁴⁴ Fox’s piece notes the magazine’s seventy-fifth anniversary and observes that it was first

sold in 1901 for the price of a shilling, compared to £1.25 in 1976. “It is possible,” he suggested, “that centenarians here and there actually handed their bobs over the newsagents’ counters and have held on to what they got ever since. Possible, but not likely! The ‘number ones’ now in existence,” he continued, “were almost certainly ‘handed down’, and that process will go on. If you come across any of those early issues, hold on to them very tightly. They are better than money.”⁴⁵



Figure 14

Retail Newsagent, Tobacconist and Confectioner, 87, no. 7 (14 February 1976): front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 15

The Newsagent and Booksellers' Review, 25, no. 25 (21 December 1901): 572. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

The notion that the principal value of these early issues was financial rather than historical was one similarly put across by none other than Bevis Hillier in a number of pieces which had appeared in *The Times*, for which he wrote a regular column on collecting antiques. “A collector’s quarry which has not yet been fully exploited by dealers or latched on to by collectors, is old magazines,” he declared in February 1975. “The richest seam,” he went on, “is the sumptuous illustrated magazines of the 1890s and Edwardian period”.⁴⁶ Hillier’s geological metaphors here should be underlined, for they will prove markedly different, as shall be seen later, to those used by others writing about magazines. Returning to *Retail Newsagent*, a little digging has managed to unearth a series of advertisements which ran in the magazine—originally called *The Newsagent and Booksellers' Review*—urging vendors to stock up on copies each month (fig. 15). “Special notice to newsagents. Order at once.” The example from December 1901 even announces a monthly supplement “giving most valuable information as to the Prices realised for ART OBJECTS of every description at Auction Sales throughout the United Kingdom and on the Continent”, making the magazine’s *métier* clear from the word go.⁴⁷ Indeed, Richard M. Ohmann has emphasised the etymological relationship between the words “magazine” and “magasin”, in particular in relationship to advertising.⁴⁸ Commercial magazines during this period, he argued, might be thought of as akin to department stores; we might think then of such *art* magazines as functioning like auction houses, as repositories of lots for sale.

“Little to do with ‘mainstream’ art history”

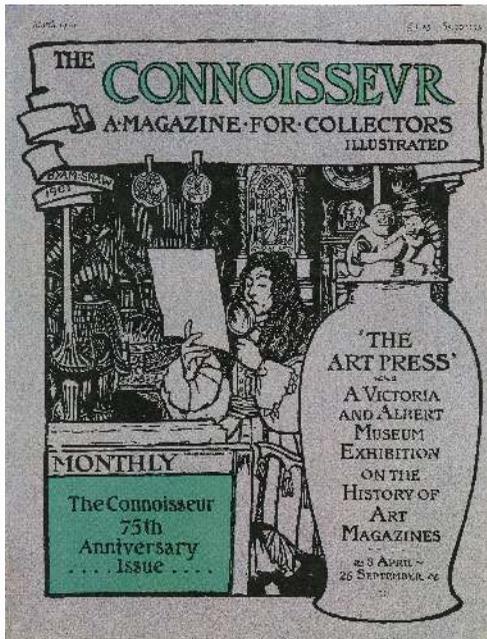


Figure 16

The Connoisseur, 191, no. 769 (March 1976): front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

For those not familiar with *The Connoisseur*, as good a hint as any is given about it by the title and March 1976 cover (fig. 16). Itself an imitation of Byam Shaw's original design for the first issue in September 1901, it is graced by the bewigged and beauty-spotted eponymous cover boy, peering discerningly through a magnifying glass at we know not what, held facing away from the viewer, a sheet of paper, at the centre of the composition yet enigmatically left blank. Beyond this, now is a helpful moment to provide some brief background information. In an editorial for the magazine's inaugural issue, J.T. Herbert Baily set out their stall, couched, as is so often the case, in terms of a perceived lack of venues for the type of material to which they were devoted. "Our purpose," he declared, "is to give every sort of information that may be of use to collectors, whether as regards origin, history, current prices, or differentiation of specimens; and the various subjects," Baily continued, "will be dealt with by writers who know, who are experts in the subjects of which they treat."⁴⁹ Beyond the magazine's textual focus, attention was drawn to the visual mechanisms of the new title: "Illustrations naturally form no unimportant part of our scheme. They will be illustrations, and not pictures merely; but pictures nevertheless. The present number," he concluded, "will, it is hoped, be accepted as an earnest of the care and thought that have been given to this part of the work no less than to the literary side."⁵⁰ As Tom Gretton has argued, *The Connoisseur* was one among a handful of magazines to appear in Britain around the turn of the century "that aimed to make themselves luxurious by their progressive embrace of the new printing technologies ... meeting the needs of their rich and 'discerning' niche markets in different ways",⁵¹ a set of priorities, as we shall see, with varying fortunes over the title's next three-quarters of a century.

The 1976 special issue contained a seventeen-page article charting the magazine's history. Largely unreferenced, its string of anecdotes amounts at times to nothing more than a hagiography of the genealogy of people and places with which the title had been associated over the years. Profiled, for example, was one Charles Relly Beard, "the antiquarian type of connoisseur who has little to do with 'mainstream' art history". "[He] made a study of dog collars throughout history," readers were told, "and the witty, discursive article he devoted to the subject ... remains the standard authority on that recondite subject."⁵² Whether clerical or canine, it matters not. To get a less idiosyncratic point of view, however, there is no better way than by citing the magazine's own self-aggrandising words which come from the editorial of their "alternative catalogue", as it had termed itself, for the V&A show:

The Connoisseur was the first serious and authoritative magazine for collectors of art and antiques. Even today, it could hardly be claimed that it is a magazine for discriminating paupers; but through library copies and shelves of bound copies from the past, it has exercised an influence over a far wider audience than its well-to-do catchment might suggest. To it, perhaps more than any other single magazine, must be attributed the vastly increased sophistication of collecting over the past three-quarters of a century. This change for the better is as evident in the advertisement section as in the editorial matter—and *The Connoisseur* is one of the few magazines in the world in which the advertisements are both a pleasure and an education.⁵³ This specific passage is particularly pertinent because it paves the way to one of the contributions to the special issue to which I would like to draw attention, a seven-page "feature" presenting adverts from the magazine's seventy-five-year history. "*The Connoisseur* has always tried to mirror the pre-occupations and interests of the antiques trade," it professed, "recognising a mutual interest in promoting an intelligent concern for the arts."⁵⁴ Its first page included a facsimile bearing the heading "Advertisements that are Read!", presumably from the magazine's early years (fig. 17). Not an example of an art object but rather itself for sale, the original function was to generate more revenue through trumpeting endorsements by *Advertising World*, for example, which is quoted as having recognised "that the magazine is unsurpassed as a medium for the sale of all kinds of art treasures." A virtually identical iteration of this catalogue of praise appeared in the advertisement pages (where else?) of the 1922–1923 issue of *Art Prices Current*, an almanac whose title surely says it all (fig. 18).⁵⁵ As for the art treasures themselves, the special issue of *The Connoisseur* contained, for example, pages nostalgically subtitled "1914: The End of an Era" (fig. 19), and "1931: World Depression Boosted the Antiques Trade" (fig. 20). At most, however, all that the feature really amounts to is, in the magazine's own words, "a useful and unusual record of the finest works of art for sale, in good times and in bad." No attention is paid, for instance, to the typographic design or reproductive technology used to make any of the "catalogue" of advertisements presented there. Similarly, the way in which the feature is laid out, with advertisements insensitively positioned wherever they might fit, demonstrates a remarkable lack of self-reflexivity on the part of these supposed arbiters of sophistication and taste. Such flagrant physical incorporation, what is more, mirrors *The Connoisseur's* shameless efforts to insert themselves into the art-historical narrative of *The Art Press*, despite eschewing requisite scholarly analysis from the magazine's overall editorial approach.

ADVERTISEMENTS THAT ARE READ!

Extracts from a few Press Notices of
THE CONNOISSEUR

□ □

"We feel compelled to say a word as to the interest there is for all connoisseurs and collectors in the advertisement pages of the magazine: they really ought to be included when the numbers are bound, instead of being destroyed as they sometimes are.—Mr. Percy Hurd, M.P., in *The Wiltshire Gazette*."

□ □

"There are not many more publications of which it can be said more justly that the literary and advertisement sections alike make an almost irresistible appeal to the reader."—*The Newspaper World*.

□ □

"The advertisements are nearly as good as the editorial matter."—*Queen*.

□ □

"A magazine which no collector or dealer can afford to be without, and which, to judge from the names it contains, very few of any standing endeavour to dispense with."—*People*.

□ □

".....Proof of the recognition that the magazine is unsurpassed as a medium for the sale of all kinds of art treasures."—*Advertising World*.

□ □

"This high-class production, the utility of which is enhanced by the many illustrations and advertisement section, which form admirable features of its contents every month."—*Midland Counties Herald*.

□ □

"The advertisements are, as usual, a delight to the public."—*Essex County Telegraph*.

□ □

"The *Connoisseur*.....provides a feast of enjoyment, by pictures, and letters, by advertisement and expert comment, for the collector, amateur and professional."—*Felding Star* (New Zealand).

Figure 17
 "Advertisements that are read!", reprinted in "75 Years of Advertisements", *The Connoisseur*, 191, no. 769 (March 1976): 224. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

ADVERTISEMENTS. ART PRICES CURRENT.

The Connoisseur

A MAGAZINE FOR COLLECTORS, ILLUSTRATED.
 Edited by C. REGINALD GRUNDY.
 Founded in 1901.
 Published on the first of every month, 2s. net.
 Annual Subscription, including Postage, Great Britain and Abroad, 25s.; except Canada, 24s.

THE CONNOISSEUR deals with every subject interesting to the collector and art lover, and in addition to being profusely illustrated in half-tone contains every month full page plates in colour of the great masters' and other works of art. The advertisement pages are one of the interesting and valuable features of THE CONNOISSEUR, and the following notices give an idea of what they are thought of by the Press.

□ □

"We feel compelled to say a word as to the interest there is for all connoisseurs and collectors in the advertisement pages of the magazine: they really ought to be included when the numbers are bound, instead of being destroyed as they sometimes are."—Mr. Percy Hurd, M.P., in *The Wiltshire Gazette*.

□ □

"There are not many more publications of which it can be said more justly that the literary and advertisement sections alike make an almost irresistible appeal to the reader."—*The Newspaper World*.

□ □

"The advertisements are nearly as good as the editorial matter."—*Queen*.

□ □

"A magazine which no collector or dealer can afford to be without, and which, to judge from the names it contains, very few of any standing endeavour to dispense with."—*People*.

□ □

".....Proof of the recognition that the magazine is unsurpassed as a medium for the sale of all kinds of art treasures."—*Advertising World*.

□ □

"This high-class production, the utility of which is enhanced by the many illustrations and advertisement section, which form admirable features of its contents every month."—*Midland Counties Herald*.

□ □

"The advertisements are, as usual, a delight to the public."—*Essex County Telegraph*.

□ □

"THE CONNOISSEUR . . . provides a feast of enjoyment, by picture and letterpress, by advertisement and expert comment, for the collector, amateur and professional."—*Felding Star* (New Zealand).

□ □

Write for *Advertisement Rates to the ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER, The Connoisseur, 1, Duke Street, St. James's, London, S.W. 1.*
 Tel. 7995 Gerrard. Telegrams: "Noredad, Piccy, London."

ii.

Figure 18
 "The Connoisseur: A Magazine for Collectors, Illustrate", *Art Prices Current*, 2, new series (1922–1923): ii. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

1914: the end of an era.

The Largest Collection of Works of Art outside a National Museum
on view on Thursday the 14th of May

A WONDERFUL opportunity exists in the few days of the Waring & Gillow sale of British, French, and the Dutch, Spanish, Italian, and Chinese, to see the finest collection of works of art ever assembled in this country. The sale is held at the Grosvenor Gallery, 10, Pall Mall, London, W.1.

Waring & Gillow, Ltd.
 166-168 OXFORD ST., LONDON, W.1.
 Old Oak Paneling a Speciality

CHIPPENDALE DRAWING ROOM BY WM. WHITELEY LTD. GREEN'S ROAD, LONDON, W.

1931: world depression boosted the antiques trade

HAMPTON'S JULY SALE AND FURNITURE

THE FINEST GAMES EVER INVENTED!

REAL GOLF with ANDERSON'S "Varsity" HOME GOLFER

Anderson, Anderson & Anderson, Ltd.
 37, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4

HARRODS POTTERY FAIR
 An Unrivalled Exhibition of CHINA
 BY ENGLAND'S LEADING MANUFACTURERS
 MONDAY MAY 4TH

THE GEORGIAN SPICE BOX
 LAVENDER DIFFUSER & MATCH BOX

DUBARRY & Co

Figure 19
 "1914: The End of an Era", in "75 Years of Advertisements", *The Connoisseur*, 191, no. 769 (March 1976): 226. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

1931: world depression boosted the antiques trade

HAMPTON'S JULY SALE AND FURNITURE

GENUINE ANTIQUE FURNITURE and WORKS OF ART

M. HARRIS & SONS
 41 to 43, NEW BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1.

THE GEORGIAN SPICE BOX
 LAVENDER DIFFUSER & MATCH BOX

DUBARRY & Co

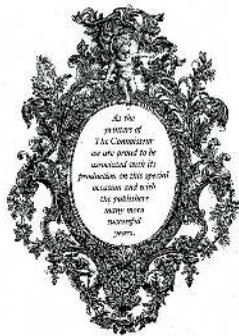
THE WORLDS LEADING ART PACKER
 SHIP THE GEMS OF ORIENTAL ART

Gameron, Smith & Marriott Ltd

Figure 20
 "1931: World Depression Boosted the Antiques Trade", in "75 Years of Advertisements", *The Connoisseur*, 191, no. 769 (March 1976): 228. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“An antique of the future, gaining value over the years”

A quick foray into the astonishing 100 pages of contemporary advertisements that ran in the issue, however, reveals that any regard to reproductive technology remained solely within the bounds of a system of patronage rather than in any objective historical context, as an ornately framed birthday message from suppliers Stevens Press, a firm “proud to be associated with its production on this special occasion” makes clear (fig. 21).⁵⁶ In a similar vein, brief attention might be turned to an advertisement for Renaissance, ““an exceptional wax polish’ sold in association with the Connoisseur Magazine”, “already used in many parts of the world by discriminating experts”, highlighting such complicity as reciprocal (fig. 22).⁵⁷ At this point, it is also worth remembering a regular feature of every single issue of the magazine, the index of advertisers which brought each number to a close: the final page from the March 1976 issue, for example, is itself a catalogue of *The Connoisseur*’s reliance on a network of commercial enterprises embedded within the magazine’s architecture (fig. 23).⁵⁸ What is more, directly above this index is to be found “The Connoisseur Register of Works of Art and Curios of every kind, now for sale or wanted.” “This list,” it explains, “is compiled for the purpose of bringing readers ... into direct communication with the owners of valuable articles for sale.” Is it a coincidence, one must wonder, that of the five items listed as for sale, two lots consist of copies of the first several issues of the magazine itself? Such mechanisms of the trade had even been fed into the magazine’s design at points at least in its recent past. Consider, for instance, one of the covers that had featured on the exhibition panel dedicated to *The Connoisseur*, that for the March 1959 issue, which, as Ruari McLean noted in his classic book *Magazine Design* of 1969, used “a photograph [that] was taken for advertising not editorial purposes” (fig. 24).⁵⁹ The caption beneath reliably informs the reader that they are looking at an “embroidered bed cover with the original passementerie by Philippe de la Salle”, given, no less, by Marie Antoinette to her niece. The photo evidently shows the work on display in the salerooms of Frank Partridge Inc., of West 56th Street in New York, again shamelessly made clear by the accompanying legend.⁶⁰



Stevens Press Limited
Bridge Street Long Eaton Nottingham

A member of the Daily Printing Group Limited

Figure 21
The Connoisseur, 191, no. 769
(March 1976): advertising section,
70. Digital image courtesy of
Samuel Bibby.

RENAISSANCE

'An exceptional wax polish' sold in association with
the *Connoisseur Magazine*

Renaissance is a professional blend of refined fossil-origin waxes with unique cleaning and protective qualities. It is already used in many parts of the world by discriminating experts. This superlative wax polish revives and protects all surfaces, gently lifting the grime of antiquity and leaving a finish delightful to see and touch. The surface glows with repeated applications. With the consent of the British Museum, acknowledged leader in conservation research, the polish is now being made available to the public.

Price per can, including packing, postage and (in U.K. only) VAT

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| U.S.A. - Air Mail: | \$7.50 |
| - Surface Mail: | \$6.00 |
| Canada - Air Mail: | \$8.40 |
| - Surface Mail: | \$6.00 |
| U.K. Only | £1.95 |
| Europe | £2.50 |
| Australia - Air Mail: | £4.60 |
| - Surface Mail: | £2.50 |

For quantities of six or more deduct 10% overall.

Order Form: To The Connoisseur, Chancery House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 1HF. (Rep. Office Reg. No. 112955 England).
Please send me by airmail/surface mail: cans of Renaissance Wax Polish at each, less 10% overall deduction on six or more cans. I enclose total payment of:

Mr./Mrs./Miss:

Address:



Cheques/money orders should be made payable to THE CONNOISSEUR

Figure 22
Ruari McLean, *Magazine Design*,
(Oxford: Oxford University Press,
1969), 68–69. Digital image
courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

THE CONNOISSEUR REGISTER

Works of Art and Curios of every time,
now on sale or wanted.

THE SALE:
CONNOISSEUR REGISTER, 1976, is a collection of 1000 works of art and curios, including a fine selection of 19th and 20th century paintings, sculpture, furniture, and decorative objects. The sale is held at the Connoisseur's Gallery, 10, St. James's Place, London, SW1A 1LR, on 15th, 16th, and 17th March 1976, from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. on each day. The sale is by auction and the highest bidder will acquire the work. The Connoisseur's Register is a unique collection of works of art and curios, and is a must for anyone interested in the art market.

AMONGST OTHERS: 19th century English furniture, including a fine mahogany dining table and chairs, a pair of mahogany side chairs, and a mahogany settee. Also, a pair of mahogany chairs, a mahogany table, and a mahogany settee. There are also several pieces of 19th century English furniture, including a fine mahogany dining table and chairs, a pair of mahogany side chairs, and a mahogany settee.

SWITZERLAND: A fine 19th century Swiss clock, a fine 19th century Swiss watch, and a fine 19th century Swiss pocket watch. There are also several pieces of 19th century Swiss furniture, including a fine mahogany dining table and chairs, a pair of mahogany side chairs, and a mahogany settee.

WANTED: Wanted: 19th century English furniture, including a fine mahogany dining table and chairs, a pair of mahogany side chairs, and a mahogany settee. Also, a pair of mahogany chairs, a mahogany table, and a mahogany settee.

LONDON: Wanted: 19th century English furniture, including a fine mahogany dining table and chairs, a pair of mahogany side chairs, and a mahogany settee. Also, a pair of mahogany chairs, a mahogany table, and a mahogany settee.

The Connoisseur Index to Advertisers

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Figure 23
The Connoisseur, 191, no. 769
(March 1976): advertising section,
viii. Digital image courtesy of
Samuel Bibby.

STUDIO
GILBERT MAN
BOOKS &
BOULDER
REPRESENTS

STUDIO INTERNATIONAL

STUDIO

The Studio book for London, 1976, is a beautiful and useful guide to the world of art and design. It is a must for anyone interested in the art market. The book is a beautiful and useful guide to the world of art and design. It is a must for anyone interested in the art market. The book is a beautiful and useful guide to the world of art and design. It is a must for anyone interested in the art market.

Figure 24
Studio International, 192, no. 983
(September/October 1976): front cover. Digital
image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

1901-1976 This Commemorative Enamel Box to celebrate Connoisseur's 75th Anniversary

This elegant, 100% gold-plated, black and white is a worthy celebration of the publication of the first number of *Connoisseur Magazine* 75 years ago.

Hand engraved and enamelled on copper, with a ceramic inlay finish, by the craftsmen selected from Britain and Barmen of the 19th Century, this Box is considered by Healy and Sons as one of the most beautiful they have ever produced.

The Box, reproduced with design from the first cover of the magazine, has engravings on eight sides, including the colour cover and a signed lid. It is a limited edition of 1000, each priced at £100.

The Box is offered to readers of *Connoisseur* at a price of only £25.00 (plus postage and packing) each of a Limited Edition of 1000. The Box, or Boxes, that you buy will be individually numbered. After the Edition is exhausted the numbers are then deleted. The object that will become an antique of the future, gaining in value over the years. It comes to you with a Certificate of Authentication in an especially designed buff coloured outer box.

The links between the home land of *Connoisseur* and the United States of America have always been very strong. What better commemorative gift to give to yourself and to your friends in this particular year? But there are only 1000. So write a cheque (made out to 'The Connoisseur') and fill in the coupon below.

Request by post (enclosed mail) will ensure delivery of your Box of 1901-1976.

The Connoisseur Box Club
Chancery House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, London, SW1V 1HF
Please send me Boxes, each priced at £25.00 (plus P & P, U.K. and Overseas £3 extra, U.S.A. and elsewhere \$3 extra).

I enclose £.....
Name
Address
City
Postcode
Country

Figure 25
The Connoisseur, 191, no. 769 (March 1976):
advertising section, 18. Digital image courtesy of
Samuel Bibby.

Most startling of all, however, is an advertisement in the March 1976 issue for a commemorative enamel box to celebrate the magazine's seventy-fifth anniversary (fig. 25).⁶¹ Pictured surrounded by the trappings of an archetypal connoisseur, all laid upon pages from early issues of the magazine—notice headings such as “Porcelain and Pottery” indicating the various categories of object upon which the title focused—the enamel box reproduces Byam Shaw's cover as its own lid. An unwitting—or better, failed—*mise-en-abyme*, the advert neglects, alas, to deliver to the viewer any of the self-reflexivity that such a device begs to provide. Rather, it offered, “at a price of only £65 ... plus postage and packing”, one of a limited edition of 250. “The Box, or Boxes, that you buy will be individually numbered. After the Edition is subscribed the templates are then broken. This *objet d'art* will become,” it brazenly promises, “an antique of the future, gaining value over the years. It comes to you,” it goes on, “with a Certificate of Authentication in an especially designed buff coloured outer box.” This incursion might head towards a close by recalling the truism that adverts in magazines set the rhythm for that which follows. Nonetheless, *The Connoisseur's* March 1976 editorial casually proclaimed its imperviousness: “No magazine, incidentally, has had a closer relationship with the antiques trade, though this has in no way imperilled the jealously guarded independence of editorial content.”⁶² Writing in the pages of *New Society*, however, Peter Fuller pounced on this assertion, questioning its meaning and veracity. “Even while the champagne corks popped in the Reynolds' Room of the Royal Academy for the magazine's birthday celebrations,” he wrote, “major advertisers were threatening to withdraw their support unless more articles devoted to the study of those objects which they regularly sold were included.”⁶³

“On a blatant quid pro quo basis”

Fuller was not the only one to highlight some of the broader issues that this “souvenir ‘catalogue’” failed to acknowledge, let alone address adequately.⁶⁴ Another reviewer, Richard Cork, writing in the *Evening Standard* in mid-June—half way through the show's run—opined of the exhibition that it “scarcely comes to terms with the intimate bond between the interests of dealers and the priorities of magazines which rely on advertising. It would have been a salutary gesture,” he went on, “if this exhibition had displayed ad pages alongside editorial content: in many cases the one could thereby be seen to have paid for the other on a blatant quid pro quo basis. By removing magazines from their normal position in the market-place to the virginal sanctuary of the museum,” he declared, “the organisers have failed to drive home perhaps the most relevant warning they could issue to editors of the future.”⁶⁵ Cork was clearly intent on addressing such issues himself; as well as being critic for the *Evening Standard*, he had also been, since the previous year, editor of the magazine *Studio International*. No doubt prompted by the V&A exhibition, but also developing themes that he had begun to think about the year before in his inaugural *Studio International* editorial, “Pitfalls and Priorities”, Cork put together a themed issue of the title dedicated to the topic of the art magazine.⁶⁶ Appearing in autumn 1976, just as the V&A show was closing, it might be thought of as something of a counter-catalogue (fig. 26).⁶⁷ To draw immediate comparison to *The Connoisseur's* special issue, I offer the following from Cork's editorial:

*however many efforts are made to dissociate the magazine from the most destructive aspects of a profit and investment-oriented art market, the very fact that Studio is packaged within an albeit minimal amount of commodity advertising identifies all of its contents with capitalist ideology at its most overt.*⁶⁸

For an example, one might turn to the verso of a two-page advert, clearly specially commissioned for the themed issue, promoting the services of Lund Humphries, “designers of fine art books and catalogues” who have, they claimed on the recto, “for many years stood high in the fraternity of the Art Press, as printers and publishers of the highest standards” (fig. 27).⁶⁹



Figure 26
Studio International, 192, no. 983
 (September/October 1976): front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 27
Studio International, 192, no. 983
 (September/October 1976): 230-xiii. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Founded in 1893, unlike so many new magazines *The Studio* (as it was called until 1964) lacked an inaugural editorial or programmatic statement making explicit its agenda. Meanwhile, no archive—beyond the pages of the periodical itself—appears to have survived, making the excavation of its early years less straightforward, but the columns of other magazines can yield some sense of the path that *The Studio* was set to follow. A notice in the literary review *The Academy* reported to its readers that the new title was forthcoming, outlining the first issue’s various contents. Presumably on the basis of some form of promotional prospectus, it then went on to signal the magazine’s intention “in the future to publish critical signed notices of exhibitions, written by artists for artists and representing from many different standpoints, the opinions of those technically informed thereon. In reviews of books,” it continued, “special attention will be given to their artistic side—their printing, binding, and illustrations”,⁷⁰ characteristics about which they were themselves not immune from scrutiny. “The first number, which has been a long time in coming,” one review declared, “will repay those who have waited. The reading,” it went on, “is good from cover to cover. The illustrations excellent and varied, and the printing and paper—even in these days of good things, hardly to be surpassed.”⁷¹ By the early 1950s, a subscription advertisement even went as far as suggesting that “*The Studio* is more than an illustrated magazine. It is an ever-changing art gallery in print”, prescient of many people’s perception of this medium in later decades.⁷²

“The recognised international vehicle of modern art knowledge”



Figure 28

Studio International, 192, no. 983 (September/October 1976): 230–xiii. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

It is just such visual and material qualities which have formed the basis of much of the historiographical attention that *The Studio* would go on to receive. Clive Ashwin, for example, has dubbed it “the first visually modern magazine”, an accolade that extended beyond its recognised importance for the emergence of the Art Nouveau style in Britain (fig. 28).⁷³ Indeed, the magazine’s formation “coincided with the perfection of photomechanical reproduction in line and half-tone, and,” he has also noted, “it was the first British periodical of art and design to make full use of the new media, with their potential for a strikingly ‘modern’ look and mass production at relatively low cost.”⁷⁴ Associated with the title from the fore was Aubrey Beardsley, responsible, for example, for the initial cover design. Beardsley capitalised on *The Studio*’s commitment to modern techniques of illustration, developing in its pages what Gerry Beegan has termed “a new photomechanical aesthetic”, specifically producing work “with

the intention that it would be mass-produced in books or magazines.” Beardsley’s printed images, Beegan stresses, “were not lesser objects, but final pieces”, a distinction that we will see to be equally still valid of work reproduced in the magazine at the time of *The Art Press*.⁷⁵ What is more, from its very beginning *The Studio* took a keen interest in publishing written work which reflected on the nature of the reproductions included in its pages, as pieces such as “Drawing for Reproduction” from the second issue attest.⁷⁶

While devoid of any declaratory statement at its inception, by 1933, however, the magazine would confidently declare in a piece of paratext that it had been led from the fore by the consistent vision of presenting to its British readers art from abroad, and, vice versa, to its international readers British art. “Thus ‘The Studio’ has become,” it asserted, “the recognised international vehicle of modern art knowledge, serving the interests of artists and art lovers everywhere.”⁷⁷ Such confidence in its importance seems only to have increased over time; the fetishisation of one’s origins seen above in relation to *The Connoisseur* was evidently not exclusive. Advertised in the November/December 1975 issue of *Studio International*, the anthology *The Studio: The Early Years* was to be co-published with The Antique Collectors Club (fig. 29). “The present selection, mainly taken from the first five years of the magazine’s existence,” it explains, “comprises a balanced and exciting presentation of the scope of ‘The Studio’, its interests, and its influence.” Having outlined notable content, the inclusion of an introductory essay by Professor D.J. Gordon, and drawn attention to the presence of illustrations throughout, the prospective purchaser is teased with a final feature: “Included is a small selection of contemporary advertisements—offers of studios, art academies, furniture designed by Heals’,

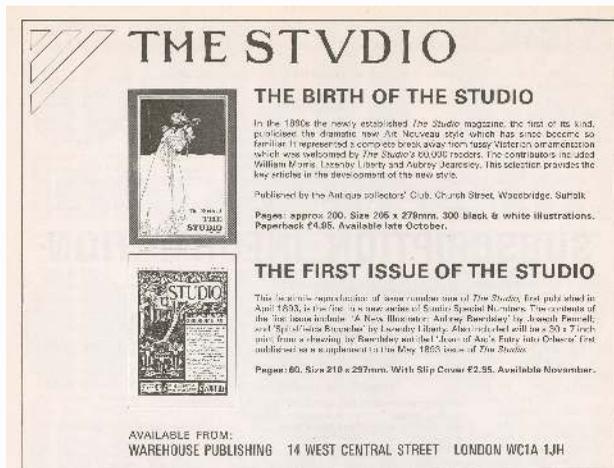


Figure 31

Studio International, 192, no. 983
(September/October 1976): xvii. Digital image
courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 32

The Birth of The Studio, 1893-1895, (Woodbridge:
The Antique Collectors Club, 1976): front cover.
Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Such efforts, however, were not the first by this magazine to have looked back at its past. In 1968, to coincide with its seventy-fifth anniversary, for example, the magazine published a number of features; “Reminiscences of *The Studio*” gathered together short recollections from leading figures including Herbert Read, Kenneth Clark, and John Rothenstein.⁸² Following these was an essay by the same D.J. Gordon mentioned above, “Dilemmas: *The Studio* in 1893-4”, which considered the magazine’s first years, placing particular emphasis on elements of its design, as well as the status of the reproductions that it contained; included, for instance, are images of some of the entries for a competition to design the title page, originally published in August 1893 (fig. 33).⁸³ These commemorative contributions were coupled with the introduction of a new trimestrial supplement dedicated to graphic design, called *Studiographic*, edited by Colin Banks and John Miles. Surely following in the footsteps of the focus that D.J. Gordon had directed to this topic in relation to *The Studio* itself, the first iteration included, for example, a piece by Hilary Evans titled “Applied Art for Fine Art’s Sake”, while the subsequent (and in fact only) reappearance of the supplement in September 1968 included such material as Bernard Myers’ “The Bauhaus—Graphic Design” (fig. 34).⁸⁴ The periodical appearance of such material in its pages clearly shows *The Studio* to have been perennially interested in its own place within a history of art magazines, and considered together these interventions might be thought of as sedimentary traces of a long-standing self-reflexive historiographical commitment.



Figure 33
 “Awards in the Title-Page Competition”, *The Studio*,
 5 (August 1893): 205. Digital image courtesy of
 Samuel Bibby.



Figure 34
 Bernard Myers, “The Bauhaus—Graphic Design”,
Studiographic, 2, Studio International 176, no. 903
 (September 1968): 102–103. Digital image courtesy
 of Samuel Bibby.

“The mechanisms which frame and disseminate artists’ work”

Returning to the September/October 1976 issue of *Studio International*, it is generally still best known for the results of a questionnaire that it published which had been sent to editors of art magazines both in Britain and abroad (fig. 35).⁸⁵ As Lori Cole has argued, questionnaires appearing in periodicals function as “a kind of microcosm of the magazine wherein artists and writers are united, if only momentarily, by their shared interest in a magazine’s platform.”⁸⁶ In this instance, however, such a shared interest is not in the particular title in which the responses appeared, but rather in the medium more generally; “the questionnaire echoes the function and format of the magazine itself,” Cole explains, using an analogy to which I will later return, “as responses are juxtaposed to form a collage of disparate viewpoints, united by a shared commitment to a larger project or movement’, in this case that of the art magazine itself.”⁸⁷ Central to this medium, one of the relationships that Cork was keen should be widely explored in his questionnaire was indeed that between advertising and editorial content, and accordingly the final question of his survey asked: “To what extent do you consider your magazine is shaped by (a) your regular advertisers, and (b) the power of the market?” And *Studio International* itself was certainly not immune to such scrutiny, including among the published answers a set of its own.

It might, in theory, be possible to claim that Studio is shaped neither by its regular advertisers nor the art market. But in practice, however much Studio may consciously fight off such influence, it is subliminally open to them at every turn. The art market still controls most of the mechanisms which frame and disseminate artists’ work; and Studio—which is prepared to publish advertisements and thereby bolster the power of the market—remains

as dependent on those mechanisms as everyone else. Any magazine which thinks otherwise is guilty of the most dangerous complacency and self-delusion.⁸⁸

The failings of *The Connoisseur*, meanwhile, to be so self-reflexive had not gone unnoticed; elsewhere in the same issue, Peter Fuller, for example, took the title and its special issue to task for managing to “mystify itself to itself”—an accusation maybe all the more apt in light of its abysmal advertisement for the enamel box.⁸⁹ Furthermore, John Tagg sarcastically proposed that the “*Connoisseur* always believed that lavishness and academicism were not incompatible.”⁹⁰ Yet, rather than focus on any of these contributions, as interesting as they all are, I would like instead to linger on a different piece in the issue, compiled by Clive Phillpot, ARLIS co-curator of the V&A exhibition. Six pages that he titled “Art Works in Print”, visually they could not be more different from the pages of advertisements catalogued in *The Connoisseur*, and alongside his essay for the ARLIS catalogue, they present an approach to their subject matter that will allow an appreciation of the complexity of the magazine and its history as a medium to emerge.

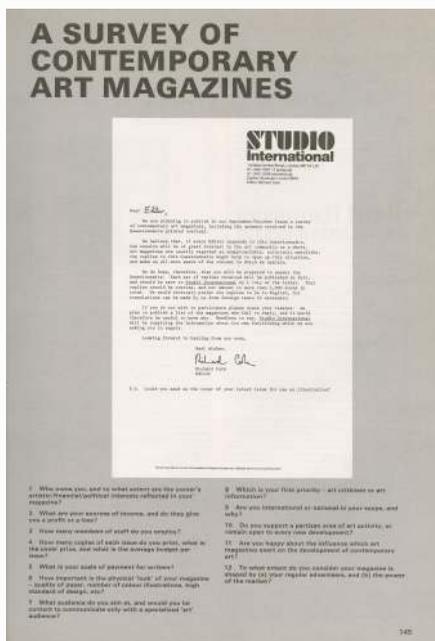


Figure 35

“Survey of Contemporary Art Magazines”, *Studio International*, 192, no. 983 (September–October 1976): 145. Digital image courtesy of Succession Picasso and DACS, London 2019.

“Where the shape of the poem becomes a counterpart of its meaning”

Phillpot was at that time Librarian at Chelsea College of Art but would shortly leave to take up the same position at MoMA. His contribution to the ARLIS volume, “Movement Magazines: The Years of Style”, consisted of a conventional account of periodicals associated with, for example, Constructivism, Dada, and De Stijl, and in particular “the quality of the visual experience which they offered to the reader.”⁹¹ He put forward the argument that the collage works of Picasso and Braque from around 1911, works that incorporated words and letters, paved the way for subsequent typographic avant-gardes (fig. 36). While I have labelled Phillpot’s catalogue essay conventional, it is certainly not worth dismissing, for plenty of what concerned

him there would be borne out by different means in his piece for *Studio International*. And it is precisely this difference that is of interest. As Phillipot himself put it, the Cubists were responsible for “the acknowledgement that the medium through which attitudes to these movements were disseminated was itself a visual medium”, a suggestion that will shortly be clear to see when considering his second piece.⁹²



Figure 36

Pablo Picasso, *Bottle of Suze*, 1912, pasted paper, gouache and charcoal, 65.4 × 50.2 cm. Collection of the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St Louis (WU 3773). Digital image courtesy of Succession Picasso and DACS, London 2019.

“It is worth noting,” Phillipot wrote, “that ... a significant part of the energy of artists actively engaged in the development of modern art was cheerfully channelled into visual experiments in magazines.”⁹³ He was quick, however, to observe that “the victory of modern typography was not as speedy or as absolute as one might suppose”. “[The] bulk of a magazine such as *Lacerba*, even after it introduced its crushing masthead halfway through its life, is substantially composed of relatively monotonous grey rectangles of justified text”,⁹⁴ as the front cover of this Futurist periodical from January 1914 demonstrates (fig. 37). “Inherited attitudes towards the technology of printing,” he went on, “worked against experiment. The almost inevitable horizontality of letterpress was not easy to circumvent until the potential of the camera and the possibility of blockmaking from collaged letterpress effects was realised.”⁹⁵ Phillipot provides no specific example—visual or verbal—of his point, however. It is certainly worth bearing in mind though that the ARLIS publication—“background reading” as it referred to itself—was very lightly illustrated indeed, with only nine images in the entire sixty-four-page volume. His essay merely includes a reproduction of the cover of issue 6 of *Merz* (fig. 38). On one level, this was, of course, because it was intended to accompany—and not duplicate—the “visual narrative in photographic form” of the exhibition screens. But by excavating Phillipot’s text a little, it is possible to discern what he was referring to more specifically.



Figure 37
Lacerba, 2, no. 1 (1 January 1914): front cover.
 Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Phillpot identifies in his essay three key protagonists in the development of movement magazines as sites of experimental typography: El Lissitzky, Kurt Schwitters, and Theo van Doesburg. He then closes the piece with the following passage: “[they] treated their magazines as objects for total design; for they realised that magazines could also communicate on a non-verbal level, rather as in visual poetry”—and here he uses a quotation—““where the shape of the poem becomes a counterpart of its meaning’.”⁹⁶ His unreferenced citation comes from the opening passage of the catalogue for the 1965 ICA exhibition *Between Poetry and Painting* curated by Jasia Reichardt, a show which had pioneered concrete poetry and its relationship with the visual arts. While Phillpot’s essay appeared, as I have mentioned, very under-illustrated, Reichardt’s text, “Type in Art”, was to the contrary. The passage that Phillpot invokes is accompanied by the Futurist Ardengo Soffici’s typogram from 1915 (fig. 39), a work poignantly described recently as an “ode to typography”.⁹⁷ This is obviously the kind of work he had been referring to when writing of letterpress’s horizontality eventually being circumvented through collaged printing effects. And it is no coincidence that this exact work, and, by contrast, the page from *Lacerba* on which its new masthead first appears—its layout still “tediously traditional”—grace the very exhibition screen dedicated to Cubism, Futurism, and Vorticism (fig. 40). As Christine Poggi has noted of works such as Soffici’s typogram, “most of these collage poems were intended to be photographed and then published as leaflets or in journals rather than to exist as unique works”, and many of the text fragments came themselves from Futurist periodicals such as *La Voce*.⁹⁸ The large A which looms at top left is indeed one of those from *Lacerba*’s “crushing” masthead. This practice, much like that of Beardsley for the pages of *The Studio*, recalls the notion of “magazine art”, “art which is realized only when the magazine itself has been composed and printed”, in fact a term defined by Phillpot himself in *Artforum* in 1980.⁹⁹ It will also be worth



Figure 38
 Clive Phillpot, “Movement Magazines: The Years of Style”, in Trevor Fawcett and Clive Phillpot (eds.), *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines*, (London: The Art Book Company, 1976), 40-41.
 Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“Presented by means of a reprographic documentation”

“Art Works in Print” principally comprises a collage of thirty-four fragments of photocopied pages of text arranged in near-horizontal bands across each page, the texts themselves oriented the same amount away from the horizontal, but in the opposite direction to the fields containing them (fig. 42). Phillpot makes no reference to this unorthodox layout—and I will return to this later—but does, in what is termed an “abstract”, offer the following rationale: “Ideas bearing on the use of printed matter—including newspapers and magazines—as a vehicle for artworks, together with examples of such works, are presented by means of a reprographic documentation showing images and phrases in context.”¹⁰² One such example includes the exact phrase from his own ARLIS essay cited earlier concerning the cheerful channelling of modern artists’ energies into magazines. On one level, his intention is not dissimilar to that of his essay for the ARLIS volume, as he further elaborates:

*The body of the article is taken up with a chronological tracing of attitudes towards, and the emergence of artworks conceived for, mass-production; from the involvement of fine artists in graphic design in the 1920s, through concrete poetry, and even cartoons.*¹⁰³

His overall focus, however, is later in time, as he himself notes: “But with the main emphasis on the conscious phase of this process in the latter half of the 1960s and early 1970s.”¹⁰⁴ Thus, after beginning with excerpts from classics such as William M. Ivins’ 1953 *Prints and Visual Communication*, or the recently appeared English translation of Walter Benjamin’s celebrated essay of 1935, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction”, it soon arrives at a selection of texts that lie at the foundation of conceptual art, and in particular its reliance upon the magazine as a medium.¹⁰⁵ Included, for example, are the opening text from *Art-Language*, which asked “Can this editorial come up for the count as a work of art within a developed framework of the visual art convention?”, Seth Siegelaub’s July/August 1970 issue of *Studio International*, Sol LeWitt’s “Sentences on Conceptual Art”, Gregory Battcock’s “Documentation in Conceptual Art”, and works specifically for the magazine medium—magazine art—by artists including Dan Graham, Joseph Kosuth, Douglas Huebler, and Daniel Buren.¹⁰⁶ Phillpot’s incorporation of such material, I contend, serves to emphasise the position of conceptual art within a longer history of art magazines, subsequently deposited upon a bedrock of the earlier avant-gardes that were the focus of his ARLIS essay.¹⁰⁷

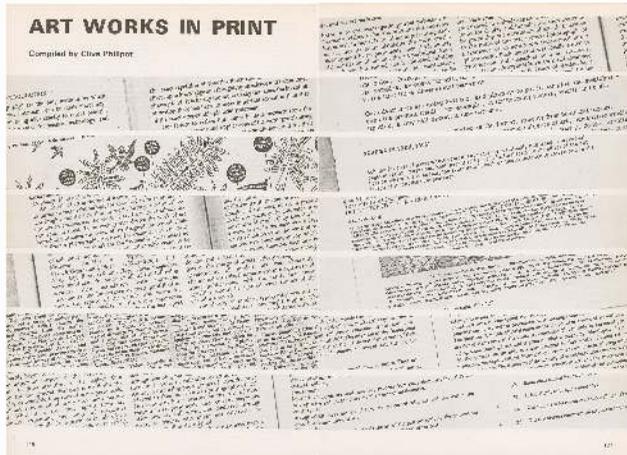


Figure 42

Clive Phillpot, “Art Works in Print”, *Studio International*, 192, no. 983 (September–October 1976): 126–127. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“Written about and reproduced in an art magazine”

Briefly considering one of these works, Dan Graham’s *Schema*, the rubric of which appears on the second page of Phillpot’s piece, can help to lay out not only some of the complexities of the magazine as one of the key sites for conceptual art, but also to illustrate some of the themes touched upon in my subsequent reading of Phillpot’s work. Graham’s piece appeared in a number of different versions, both generic and specific, from 1966 well into the 1970s, including an iteration which appeared, of course, in *Studio International* in May 1972 (fig. 43).¹⁰⁸ In each of its variants, the piece comprises a list which alphabetically catalogues, in the words of Alexander Alberro, “the internal grammatical structure and external physical appearance of the specific printed matter context in which it is placed.” Thus, it shows, for example, a page which contains nine adjectives, one adverb, and so on, and which is printed on 118 grams per square metre, hunterblade paper. “The exhaustive self-reflexivity of each variant,” Alberro suggests, “fuses content and context, subject and object, and the work takes form both as and on the page on which it is printed.”¹⁰⁹ Meanwhile, as Gwen Allen has noted, “[to] come across *Schema* ... is to be momentarily distracted from the meaning of the words by the shapes of the letters and numbers”. “Our automatic reading habits are disrupted, we are reminded that reading is an activity that is not only conceptual but profoundly visual”.¹¹⁰ Graham himself, reflecting in 1985 on his various works for magazine pages, recalled that while running a gallery in New York in the 1960s, he “learned that if a work of art wasn’t reproduced in a magazine it would have difficulty attaining the status of ‘art’. It seemed,” he went on, “that in order to be defined as having value, that is as ‘art’, a work had only to be exhibited in a gallery and then to be written about and reproduced in an art magazine. Then this record of the no longer extant installation, along with more accretions of information after the fact, became the basis for its fame, and to a large extent, its economic value.”¹¹¹ This last observation might equally apply to the V&A exhibition and its screens, as a page from a review in *Studio International* bears out (fig. 44). Accordingly, Graham began to produce works such as *Schema*, which circumvented this

symbiosis, this blatant quid pro quo, and which subverted the market: in effect, the copy became the original, superseding it, and the magazine as a medium was foregrounded.

- 9 adjectives
- 1 adverb
- approx. 83-39%, area not occupied by type
- approx. 16-61%, area occupied by type
- 1 column
- 0 conjunctions
- 003 mms. depression of type into surface of page
- 0 gerunds
- 0 infinitives
- 25 letters of alphabet
- 6 lines
- 60 mathematical symbols
- 32 nouns
- 20 numbers
- 4 participles
- 12"x9" page
- 118 gsm paper sheet
- hunterblade paper stock
- 0035" thin paper stock
- 6 prepositions
- 0 pronouns
- 18D size type
- univers 689 typeface
- 53 words
- 0 words capitalized
- 0 words italicized

Figure 43

Dan Graham, *Schema*, "Eight Pieces by Dan Graham", *Studio International*, 183, no. 944 (May 1972): 212. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 44

John Tagg, "Movements and Periodicals: The Magazines of Art", *Studio International*, 192, no. 983 (September–October 1976): 137. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 45

Dan Graham (ed.), *Aspen*, 8 (Fall–Winter 1970–1971). Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Phillpot was certainly very tapped into the conceptual art scene, something that can be explicitly seen through his earlier involvement with *Studio International*. As the result of a piece that he had written for the ARLIS newsletter in 1972, reporting on a panel discussion about magazines which had taken place at the ICA, then editor Peter Townsend had invited Phillpot to contribute a regular column to the magazine.¹¹² Titled "Feedback", its aim was "to draw attention to articles in other magazines, to new magazines, to exhibition catalogues"—note the proximity in Phillpot's words of these two categories—"and other publications that are not normally discussed or reviewed widely."¹¹³ And it is Phillpot's close engagement with artists' magazines of this period that clearly underlies the visual form of his "reprographic documentation". Specifically, I would like to suggest one title in particular, and one individual artwork published in it, as instructive: in fact the first magazine that Phillpot mentions in his column "Feedback", *Aspen: The Magazine in a Box*. The New-York-based title was begun by Phyllis Johnson in 1965 as "the first three-dimensional magazine".¹¹⁴ Drawing on the original meaning of the word "magazine" as a storehouse (one similarly emphasised by the cover of the special issue of *Studio International*, which had included the relevant page seemingly torn from a dictionary beneath a graffitied question mark), *Aspen* comprised unbound multimedia contributions—including pamphlets, posters, Super 8 films, sound recordings, and musical scores—by contemporary artists, writers, and composers, all contained within a box (fig. 45). Issue 8, which appeared in 1970, was guest-edited by Dan Graham and included a work to which I would like to draw attention: Robert Smithson's *Strata: A Geophotographic Fiction*.

“Like geological strata whose formation traces the evolution of art”

Strata comprises a collage of ten horizontal layers each of found text and photographs of fossils, and was originally folded into four contiguous leaves (fig. 46).¹¹⁵ The work can, of course, be considered within the well-known context of Smithson’s interest in geology and geological matter,¹¹⁶ but it might additionally be understood as playing on the status and format of the magazine as a medium. As Gwen Allen has shown, Smithson very much thought of magazines geologically; he would write in one of his notebooks of “the Magazine as a quasi-object; if we consider a magazine in terms of space and form, we discover rectangular sheets composed of strata.”¹¹⁷ And of course precisely what Phillpot does in “Art Works in Print” is to build up layer upon layer of found texts (fig. 47), stratifying them into a single narrative (he even included as one of his layers an extract from *Aspen*). Smithson and then Phillpot were not the only ones, however, to conceive of magazines in this way, and here it is worth recalling the prospecting that Bevis Hillier was seen to advocate earlier. Writing elsewhere in the same issue of *Studio International*, John A. Walker proposed: “A defining characteristic of magazines is periodicity; they appear regularly month after month and are deposited in public and private libraries and archives like geological strata whose formation traces the evolution of art.”¹¹⁸ This is certainly reminiscent of Phillpot’s stated intention to chart chronologically “attitudes towards, and the emergence of artworks conceived for, mass-production”, an archaeological endeavour in which the accumulation of cuttings facilitates the recovery of a printed past, just as Smithson leads us chronologically through geological eras: Cretaceous, Jurassic, Triassic, and so forth. While Phillpot also builds up geological layers of texts and images, he does so in a way ever so slightly different from Smithson. This distinction is important: Smithson’s layers are strictly horizontal, whereas Phillpot’s are not.

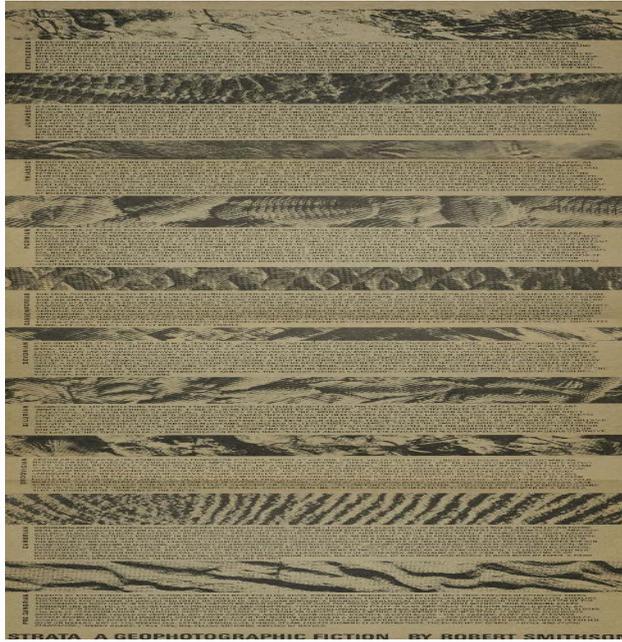


Figure 46

Robert Smithson, “Strata: A Geophotographic Fiction”, *Aspen*, 8 (Fall–Winter 1970–1971): section 12. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

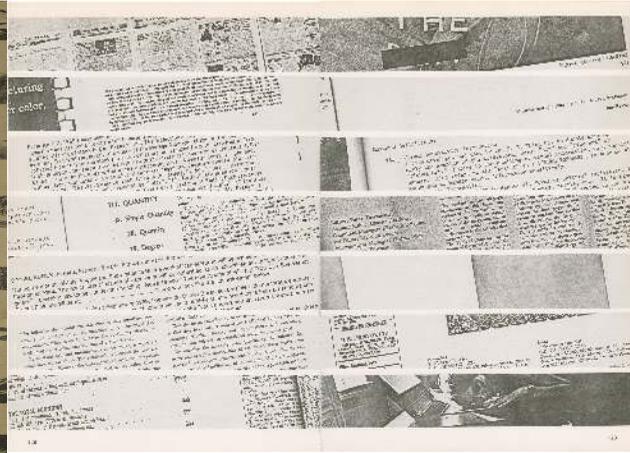


Figure 47

Clive Phillpot, “Art Works in Print”, *Studio International*, 192, no. 983 (September–October 1976): 128–129. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Extending the geological metaphor, this phenomenon might be termed “cross-bedding”, an analogy that I owe to Caroline Jones’ work on Smithson: sedimentary structures of near-horizontal units that are internally composed of inclined layers (fig. 48).¹¹⁹ Recollect Phillpot’s admonition of letterpress’s inherent horizontality in his essay for the ARLIS collection, and this becomes all the more germane. It might be recalled too that the process of letterpress printing, an assemblage of type, involves beds, the structures in which the individual letters are laid together to form words, sentences, paragraphs, pages of text, and so on, stacked upon each other, blurring a line between the acts of depositing and compositing. The texts in *Studio International* that come before and after Phillpot’s piece sit squarely on the page, as do the layers either side of geological cross-bedding. One can imagine the awry *mise-en-page* of Phillpot’s cross-bedded texts arresting a reader as they flick through the magazine, causing them to pause and reflect on the form and content of these pages. As Dan Graham wrote in relation to *Schema*, “a magazine page ... generates its meanings from the overall context in which it is published, particularly the pages immediately surrounding it”, a suggestion equally applicable to “Art Works in Print” and its position within *Studio International*.¹²⁰



Figure 48

Cross-Bedding, found photograph. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Smithsonesque layering and the non-horizontality of movement magazines, however, are not all that is at play in Phillipot's piece. Again, recalling his statement about "inherited attitudes towards the technology of printing", as well as the liberation brought about by collage, he cites too "the potential of the camera". And in "Art Works in Print", in a manner arguably redolent of Beardsley's earlier achievements in the same magazine's pages, he realizes such a potential through the technology that he uses to make the piece: the photocopier—of course, a form of camera, and a means of reproduction that had played an important role in conceptual art. Pertinently too, xerography might also be thought of here in terms of its threat to authenticity, its challenges to authorship—both sacred to the cultures of connoisseurship and economies of value typified by the certificated enamel commemorative box considered above. There is certainly though a nod in Phillipot's piece to Smithson's. Subtitled "A Geophotographic Fiction", the term "fiction" foregrounds the extracts as neither authentic nor real, but rather as reproductions. Similarly, it is worth remembering that most types of fossil are themselves, of course, copies, and Smithson's piece further copies them. Craig Owens has indeed referred to Smithson's photos of fossils as "[disintegrating], due to over enlargement into the photomechanical 'language' of the half-tone screen."¹²¹ Phillipot's fragments are reproduced in *Studio International*, a magazine printed using offset lithography, but in a way which clearly leaves traces of their earlier life as photocopied extracts. Notice, for example, the shadow of the gutter visible in the extract from Benjamin's essay. Phillipot even includes an image from the 1970 exhibition catalogue *Software* of what appears to be a woman laying her face on the glass of a photocopier.¹²² His description of the piece as a "reprographic documentation" becomes all the more clear, the technology of printing now working for, rather than against, experiment. Indeed, as Tim Ingold has recently observed, "in the very principle of its operation, the press is stratigraphic, in that it works by overlaying one surface [i.e. ink] upon another [i.e. paper]."¹²³ That the emergence of geology as a modern scientific discipline was aided, just like art history, by concurrent innovations in the processes of graphic reproduction renders Phillipot's mode of visual expression (and Smithson's before him) all the more effective.¹²⁴

“A consonance between content and form”

The most important distinction between Phillipot’s pieces for the ARLIS publication and *Studio International* lies, however, in the following sentence that he includes in his “abstract”: “The use of the exhibition catalogue and the art magazine as exhibition spaces emerges from this sequence.” On one level, this statement speaks to the blurring of the two genres brought about by conceptual art, and for that matter *Studio International*—recall, for example, Seth Siegelaub’s well-known July/August 1970 issue of the magazine which constituted an exhibition in itself, or John Perreault’s 1975 issue of *TriQuarterly*, “Anti-Object Art” (extracts of both are, needless to say, included in Phillipot’s piece).¹²⁵ But on another level, it points, I propose, to the limitations or restrictions that the conventional ARLIS publication imposed on Phillipot in distinction to a magazine like *Studio International*. It is a gesture too to the inadequacy of merely hijacking the magazine as straightforward alternative to the conventional museum-produced exhibition catalogue. For ultimately it was the medium itself, the magazine, and its history, which afforded Phillipot the opportunity to put across his message most successfully; just as the Cubists had realised that the medium whereby attitudes towards the avant-garde were disseminated was itself a visual one, just as concrete poetry explored the physical form of the letters used as well as the meaning of the language being conveyed, so too could magazine art explore the physical conditions of the medium as well as thematising magazines and their history. Phillipot assembled an ode to magazines, where the shape of the poem becomes a counterpart of its meaning, a collage poem which was “realized only when the magazine itself [had] been composed and printed.” As he would himself put it in his 1980 *Artforum* article, “many artists conceive works specifically in terms of the processes which are employed to multiply them, fully conscious of their advantages and limitations, and can thus achieve a consonance between content and form.”¹²⁶ Phillipot’s “Art Works in Print”, then, catalogues his history of art magazines, one that is composed through its stratification—both verbal *and* visual—of avant-gardes, “consciously using the production of a magazine to question the nature of artworks”.¹²⁷

By way of the briefest of comparisons, a couple of distinctions might be made explicit between Phillipot’s piece in *Studio International* and the pages of *The Connoisseur* considered earlier. The first is, of course, that each was published in a title aimed at quite a different audience than the other, something signalled by each periodical’s subtitle: on the one hand “Journal of Modern Art”; on the other “Magazine for Collectors, Illustrated”. But I would also like to return to advertising—so pervasive in the structures of *The Connoisseur*. The culmination of Phillipot’s piece is the inclusion of the complete series of twelve works that conceptual artist Stephen Kaltenbach had placed in the advertising section of *Artforum* between November 1968 and December 1969 (fig. 49). I do even wonder whether the first of them—ART WORKS—provided Phillipot with the title for his own piece. Kaltenbach, like others, sought an alternative space in which to exhibit his work, yet one that would at the same time attempt to destabilise the structures of its new context; Phillipot’s “Art Works in Print” continues in this vein for he had realised that precisely where and how the V&A exhibition was catalogued was what mattered: cross-bedding.

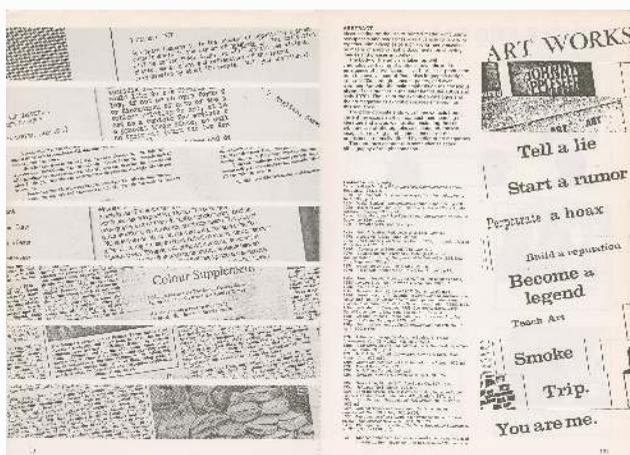


Figure 49

Clive Phillpot, “Art Works in Print”, and Stephen Kaltenbach, “Sequence of small advertisements placed in *Artforum* from November 1969 to December 1969 inclusive”, *Studio International*, 192, no. 983 (September–October 1976): 130–131. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

“Incisive commentary and appropriate visual material”

Having dwelt on the various publications that were produced in print in association with the exhibition, I would like to return to where I began—the screens that constituted the main part of the display. Not only is how they were conceived and put together of note, but so too is how they were subsequently received, and briefly considering both can enrich an understanding of the medium that the V&A exhibition set out to champion, as well as the works cataloguing it that have already been considered in this essay. It had always been ARLIS’s hope that the exhibition would travel after its run in London and from the early stages of planning this underpinned the decision to adopt such a display strategy.¹²⁸ Notes from a curatorial meeting held in autumn 1974 set out proposals for the screens’ basic structure:

*Each unit would deal with a single aspect or topic, and would contain a paragraph or two of incisive commentary and appropriate visual material. In the catalogue the aspects of the topics could be treated at greater length, and the subject could be handled more discursively since there would [be] no need to chop it up into little pieces.*¹²⁹

By the middle of 1975, the method for determining the content and form of each screen had been established more precisely; members of the organising committee were to “prepare dossiers of photocopied material for each screen unit, with captions.” This material was then “discussed with the designer, and revisited and adapted as necessary.” Thereafter, “working from the photocopied material,” the designer “[prepared] the basic layout of the screen unit, and the captions.”¹³⁰

What I would like to draw out from these descriptions is the similarity that they bear to the practice of collage, a technique, as has already been seen, that had proved particularly influential elsewhere for Phillpot. Recall the suggestion that the length of the catalogue entries avoided the need for their subject to be chopped up into little pieces, from which it might be inferred to the contrary for the screens with their visual narrative in photographic form. And note the idea of a dossier of raw visual material from which the designer could take individual fragments, and also

Indeed, I would like to extend the analogy with collage a little further by specifically drawing attention to the visual language of the V&A's screens. Burton likened the exhibition visitor's viewing experience to standing in front of a magazine stall; the first screen, which doubled as the exhibition's promotional poster, makes this clear—seventy or so magazines are to be seen assembled in a fashion unmistakably reminiscent of a news-stand (fig. 50). Every cover is carefully positioned, each one overlapping others like pieces of paper used to create a collage. As a quick aside, it seems to me more than likely that the idea for this layout came from the frontispiece of Ruari McLean's classic book *Magazine Design* that I cited earlier (fig. 51). A link might surely also be made here to the range of avant-garde periodicals whose covers included collages incorporating material from earlier magazines, for example, issue 3 of *Der Dada* (fig. 52), and issue 5 of *La Révolution Surréaliste* (fig. 53); and also to the visual strategies of historiographical approaches such as Howardena Pindell's article, "Alternative Space: Artists' Periodicals" (fig. 54).¹³³ But it was not just a case of magazines themselves providing material for collage; the site of their display and sale, the news-stand, when seen as a whole can be thought of as a form of collage *par excellence*. Consider, for example, a photograph by British artist Nigel Henderson from London's East End in the early 1950s, in which magazines and advertisements are pictured together forming what might be thought of as an assemblage of typography, corresponding to the notion that the diverse and fragmented visual experience of urban life informed a modernist aesthetic from which the medium of collage emerged (fig. 55).¹³⁴ And just as for the news-stand, so too might the medium of the magazine itself be understood as a form of collage—the considered juxtaposition of disparate fragments forming together a unified entity with a coherent meaning.¹³⁵



Figure 53
La Révolution Surréaliste, 5 (15 October 1925): front cover. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

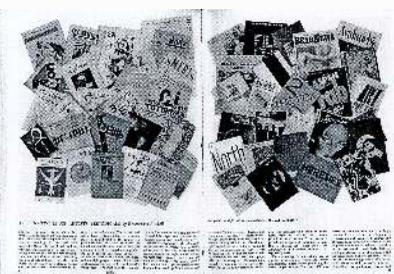


Figure 54
Howardena Pindell, "Alternative Space: Artists' Periodicals", *The Print Collectors Newsletter*, 8, no. 4 (September–October 1977): 96–97. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.



Figure 55
Nigel Henderson, *J. Parker Newsagents, 216 Bethnal Green Road, London*, circa 1949–circa 1956, black and white negative, 5.5 × 5.5 cm. Collection of Tate Archive (TGA 201011/3/1/128/8). Digital image courtesy of Tate and the Nigel Henderson Estate (CC-BY-NC-ND (3.0 Unported)).

“The assemblage of specimens”

The richness of the screens was immediately apparent. To coincide with the opening of the V&A exhibition, ARLIS staged a two-day international conference at the University of Sussex on the topic of art periodicals. In a report of the proceedings published in the summer 1976 issue of the society's *Art Libraries Journal*, Anne Dallett wrote of the “wealth of visual and factual information to be found on the panels, which will travel after the exhibition closes in September. But,” she questioned, “can this valuable information as assembled”—another nod to collage—“be preserved in a permanent form? Some kind of visual reproduction,” she went on, “would be more than a souvenir”, a suggestion perhaps all the more meaningful given Roy Strong's original conception of the special issue of *The Connoisseur*.¹³⁶ Dallett was not alone. The April 1976 newsletter of the North American chapter of ARLIS had included a similar plea, opining that it “would be a shame if the documentation of this exhibit” were lost. It urged its readers to write to John Harthan, Keeper of the National Art Library, “asking him sincerely to have the exhibition microfiched so that all libraries can purchase the documentation and use it. There really isn't a catalog to the exhibition,” it tellingly continued, “and it would be a great boon for these fiche to also be used in the presentation of the exhibition in some photographic form along with the collections of journals which could be gathered in specific libraries not only in England, but throughout the world.”¹³⁷ The museum evidently heeded to this lobby, engaging the firm of Chadwyck-Healey to carry out the task.

As a reproductive technology, microfiche had increased in popularity during the second half of the 1970s as a mode of document preservation, a means of widening information access, and as a solution to libraries' increasing lack of space. The publisher Charles Chadwyck-Healey had already developed a list that included facsimiles of both art periodicals and exhibition catalogues, but the capture of an exhibition itself represented a new venture, no doubt precipitated by the particularities of *The Art Press*'s method of display, described in the microfiche's Foreword as “a montage of text and illustration”, yet another allusion to collage.¹³⁸ Anthony Burton, in fact, went as far as claiming that it was “probably the first exhibition to be reproduced on microfiche”.¹³⁹ Each of the fifty-one screens was photographed and reproduced on microfiche together with a newly commissioned Introduction written by Burton, as well as copies of the labels which had accompanied the periodicals that had been displayed in vitrines—all contained on a total of twenty-one loose index-card-sized sheets, almost as if emulating a work of conceptual art.¹⁴⁰ The twentieth of these, for instance, reproduced three screens from the “Magazines of Modern Art Movements” section of the exhibition (fig. 56).



Figure 56

The Art Press: Two Centuries of the Art Periodical, (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1977), microfiche 20. Digital image courtesy of Samuel Bibby.

Burton's Introduction provides further context for the rationale behind the screens and their intended effect, mapping onto this the unforeseen aptness of microfiche in recreating the viewing experience of the news-stand that the original exhibition had sought to create:

*The rough grouping of the material of the panels could be seen at a distance. Coming closer, the visitor could focus upon whatever attracted his eye on the panel: the explanatory captions, and indeed the print on the magazine pages, became legible as he approached. The reader who studies these microfiche will find that he can experience them in a similar way. If he looks at them with the unaided eye, he can see the layout and headings; if he puts them in the fiche reader he can focus on small areas of the panels, which, magnified on the screen of the reader, appear the size they actually were in the exhibition.*¹⁴¹

I would like to suggest, however, that such a doubling is not the only one at play here. By being captured on a series of microfiche, the exhibition screens, about magazines, become a magazine themselves, a collection or storehouse of unbound leaves, leaves photographically reproducing and distributing an exhibition for consumption beyond the walls of the museum in which they were originally created and displayed. As both catalogue *and* magazine then, a further exhibition space emerges, and as the specific result of particular practices of reproduction and viewing. The geological strata of magazine page, exhibition screen, and then microfiche are placed beneath a microscope as if for scientific scrutiny in a manner I hope redolent of an art history intent on subjecting its own practices to objective analysis. Resonant with this is one of the pieces of found text included in Robert Smithson's *Strata*, a statement made by the palaeontologist, Edwin H. Colbert: "Unless the information gained from the collecting and preparing of fossils is made available through the printed page, the assemblage of specimens is essentially a pile of meaningless junk."¹⁴²

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Samuel Bibby is Managing Editor of the journal *Art History*. He is currently working on a larger project from which this essay is drawn, *Art History as Things Seen: The New Art Historiography*, which looks at art magazines and art-historical periodicals from 1970s Britain.

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 2. Aleksandr Rodchenko, “Against the Synthetic Portrait, For the Snapshot”, *Novyi Lef* 4 (April 1928): 14, reprinted in John E. Bowlt (ed.), *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2017), 251.
 3. Guillermo de Torre, “Modelos de Estación”, *Síntesis* 14 (July 1928): 231.
 4. “The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines”, press release (V&A Archive: MA/28/273, 1976).
 5. As illustrated, for example, in Martina Margetts, “200 Years of The Art Press”, *Arts Review* 28, no. 9 (30 April 1976): 211.
 6. Anthony Burton, “Introductory Note”, in *The Art Press: Two Centuries of the Art Periodical* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1977), microfiche 1, row 1, frame 3.
 7. Alex Ross, “Catalogue”, in *Grove Art Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), accessed 9 April 2014.
 8. The only person to have considered them all already appears to be Helene E. Roberts, in a series of reviews. See Helene E. Roberts, “[Review of] *The Art Press: Two Centuries of Art Magazines* and *The Connoisseur*”, *Art Libraries Journal* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 48–51; Helene E. Roberts, “[Review of] *Studio International*”, *Art Libraries Journal* 2, no. 2 (Summer 1977): 44–48; and Helene E. Roberts, “[Review of] *The Art Press: Two Centuries of the Art Periodical*”, *Art Libraries Journal* 3, no. 3 (Autumn 1978): 48–51.
 9. Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, “The Rise of Periodical Studies”, *PMLA* 121, no. 2 (March 2006): 517–518.
 10. Gwen Allen (ed.), *Documents of Contemporary Art: The Magazine* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2016), 14.

11. See Samuel Bibby, "Hidden Trails in Art History", *Art History* 40, no. 1 (February 2017): 204–209.
12. Walter Benjamin, "Excavation and Memory", in Marcus Paul Bullock, Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith (eds.), *Selected Writings, Volume 2, Part 2, 1931–1934*, trans. Rodney Livingstone and Edmund Jephcott (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005 [circa 1932]), 576.
13. For the briefest of accounts of the museum's publishing enterprises, see Elizabeth James, *The Victoria and Albert Museum: A Bibliography and Exhibition Chronology, 1852–1996* (London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998), xx–xxii.
14. Henry Cole, *The Functions of the Science and Art Department* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1857), 21.
15. Roy Strong, *The Roy Strong Diaries, 1967–1987* (London: Phoenix, 1998, 141 [entry for 9 February 1974]).
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17. Peter Cannon-Brookes, "The Evolution of the Art Exhibition Catalogue and its Future", *Art & Artists* 220 (January 1985): 23.
18. Cannon-Brookes, "The Evolution of the Art Exhibition Catalogue and its Future", 25. This was indeed even attested to at the time by Roy Strong, who suggested that: "spiralling prices threaten in particular the production of exhibition catalogues, which increasingly have to take the form of books." See Roy Strong, "Director's Report", in Anthony Burton (ed.), *Victoria & Albert Museum: Review of the Years 1974–1978* (London: HMSO, 1981), 21.
19. Roy Strong, Marcus Binney, and John Harris, *The Destruction of the Country House, 1875–1975* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), 6.
20. Anthony Burton, "Exhibition Catalogues", in Philip Pacey (ed.), *Art Library Manual: A Guide to Resources and Practice* (London: Bowker, 1977), 73.
21. Seth Siegelaub and Charles Harrison, "On Exhibitions and the World at Large", *Studio International* 178, no. 917 (December 1969): 202.
22. Seth Siegelaub and Charles Harrison, "On Exhibitions and the World at Large", *Studio International* 178, no. 917 (December 1969): 202.
23. *Studio International* 180, no. 924 (July/August 1970). For a short account of Siegelaub's larger involvement with this magazine, see Jo Melvin, "Seth Siegelaub and *Studio International*: Conceptual Art and Production", in *Seth Siegelaub: Beyond Conceptual Art* (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 2016), 466–476. See also Anne Moeglin-Delcroix, "Du catalogue comme oeuvre d'art et inversement", *Les cahiers de Musée national d'art moderne* 56–57 (Summer–Autumn 1996): 94–117.
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26. See Stanley T. Lewis, "Periodicals in the Visual Arts", *Library Trends* 10, no. 3 (Winter 1962): 330–352.

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29. For the most comprehensive of these, see Christian M. Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum, 1898–1903* (Vienna: Edition Tusch, 1975).
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31. Strong, "Foreword", vi.
32. Trevor Fawcett, letter to Anthony Burton, 29 November 1973 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
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34. Anthony Burton, letter to Thomas MacRobert, 30 October 1974 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
35. Anthony Burton, letter to Roy Strong, 13 January 1975 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
36. See Samuel Bibby, "'The Pursuit of Understanding': *Art History* and the Periodical Landscape of Late-1970s Britain", *Art History* 40, no. 4 (September 2017): 808–837.
37. See Art & Language, *Art & Language, 1966–1975* (Oxford: Museum of Modern Art, 1975).
38. Roy Strong, letter to Bevis Hillier, 14 January 1975 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
39. Bevis Hillier, letter to Roy Strong, 18 January 1975 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
40. Anthony Burton, letter to Trevor Fawcett, 20 January 1975 (V&A Archive: MA/28/273).
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123. Tim Ingold, "Surface Textures: The Ground and the Page", *Philological Quarterly* 97, no. 2 (Spring 2018): 146.
124. See Martin J.S. Rudwick, "The Emergence of a Visual Language for Geological Science, 1760–1840", *History of Science* 14, no. 3 (September 1976): 149–195.
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128. An iteration of the show did, in fact, travel abroad; see Karen McKenzie and Mary F. Williamson (eds.), *The Art and Pictorial Press in Canada: Two Centuries of Art Magazines* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1979). Both versions were reviewed together in Claude Bergeron and W. McAllister Johnson, "Two Looks at the Art Press", *RACAR* 7, nos 1–2 (1980): 113–116.
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130. Anthony Burton, untitled document, 5 June 1975 (V&A Archive, MA/28/273).
131. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin Books, 1972), 5.
132. Herbert Bayer, "Aspects of Design of Exhibitions and Museums", *Curator* 4, no. 3 (July 1961): 267.

133. Howardena Pindell, “Alternative Space: Artists’ Periodicals”, *The Print Collectors Newsletter* 8, no. 4 (September/October 1977): 96–109, 120–121.
134. See, for example, Walter Benjamin, “Attested Auditor of Books”, (1923–1926), trans. Edmund Jephcott, in Michael W. Jennings, Brigid Doherty, and Thomas Y. Levin (eds.), *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility, and Other Writings on Media* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 171–172.
135. I develop the ideas set out here in a forthcoming essay: “‘How to Present Your Ideas Effectively and Make Them Stick’: Historiography as Collage”.
136. Anne Dallett, “The ARLIS International Conference on Art Periodicals”, *Art Libraries Journal* 1, no. 2 (Summer 1976): 5.
137. Judith A. Hoffberg, “The Art Press: An Exhibition”, *ARLIS/NA Newsletter* 4, no. 3 (April 1976): 81.
138. Charles Chadwyck-Healey, untitled Foreword, in *The Art Press: Two Centuries of the Art Periodical* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey, 1977), microfiche 1, row 1, frame 1.
139. Burton, “Introductory Note”, microfiche 1, row 1, frame 4.
140. An analogy could be drawn, for example, with the index cards that comprised the catalogues for Lucy Lippard’s so-called “Numbers Shows”; see Lucy R. Lippard, “Curating by Numbers”, *Tate Papers* 12 (Autumn 2009), accessed 20 June 2019.
141. Burton, “Introductory Note”, microfiche 1, row 1, frames 3–4.
142. Edwin H. Colbert, *The Dinosaur Book: The Ruling Reptiles and Their Relatives* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951), 34.

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