

John Dixon Hunt, ed., *Journal of Garden History; an International Quarterly*. London, Taylor & Francis Ltd, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January-March 1981). 111 pp., illus., 70,00\$ annual

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FIGURE 3. Family of Theodotus, detail. Rome, Theodotus chapel, S. Maria Antiqua, 741-752 A.D. Krautheimer, pl. 85 (Photo: J. Osborne).

Trastevere), and the 'disabitato,' the large stretches of land inside the Aurelian walls which lay abandoned or were used for crops or pasture. An entire chapter is devoted to the one mediaeval addition to the physical area occupied by the city: the Borgo. It is in some respects comforting to learn that the plethora of tourist stalls in the streets around St. Peter's were if anything more profuse in the thirteenth century than they are today.

The footnotes at the end of the book are bibliographical rather than explanatory, and they provide a valuable summary of available literature on almost every topic raised in the text. These will be extremely useful to students who use the work as a starting point for their own research on mediaeval Rome. There is also an appendix which provides a chronological list of the mediaeval popes (a thoughtful addition), and two indices: one of places and subjects, another of proper names.

A word or two must also be said about the illustrations, which are copious, and which save the reader from any necessity of consulting other sources. The author has not only included modern photographs of most of the monuments which he discusses, but also has provided the reader with much that is infinitely less accessible: early maps and drawings of the city reproduced from a variety of manuscripts (for example the 1323 map of Fra Paolina da Venezia preserved in the Vatican Library), nineteenth-century photographs from the Museo di Roma and other sources,

and a number of useful architectural reconstructions. The result is a compendium that no student of mediaeval Rome can afford to be without.

There are only a few errors and inconsistencies in the lengthy text. The male saint who shares the dedication of the Theodotus chapel in S. Maria Antiqua is Quiricus (Cyr) not Quirinus (p. 75); the fragment of mosaic from the Oratory of John VII in St. Peter's (pl. 84) depicts one of the midwives from the Nativity of Christ not the 'Birth of the Virgin' as stated in its caption (p. 103), and at last report it was still in the Vatican grottoes beneath St. Peter's not in S. Maria in Cosmedin (which does however house another fragment from the Oratory depicting the Adoration of the Magi); and the Temple of Fortuna Virilis which was converted to Christian use in the ninth century is referred to variously as S. Maria *ad* Gradellis (p. 239) and S. Maria *in* Gradellis (p. 362). The difference, although small, is significant. Finally, one misprint noted in the index is the listing of the Catacomb of Comitilla (p. 374) where Domitilla is meant. There is no Catacomb of Comitilla, and the error is doubly unfortunate since it may lead to confusion with another cemetery which does exist, that of Commodilla.

There are in addition a few problems of identification and interpretation which can be questioned, for example the identification of the wall-painting in the lower church of San Clemente as an Assumption of the Virgin (p. 141).

There is also a strong argument, not mentioned by the author, that it depicts the Ascension of Christ. In these instances, however, the burden of proof must rest on those of us who think otherwise! Richard Krautheimer's book is, and will remain, a crowning triumph to a most distinguished career. We can only hope that he plans to share more of his expertise with us in this fashion.

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JOHN DIXON HUNT, ed. *Journal of Garden History; an International Quarterly*. London, Taylor & Francis Ltd, Vol. 1, No. 1 (January-March 1981). 111 pp., illus., 70,00\$ annual.

Is another specialized journal, indeed one so costly, really necessary? With so many serials to keep track of, must another be added to the long list, to be routinely scanned and registered? John Dixon Hunt, the editor of the new *Journal of Garden History* thinks so. Moreover, he thinks that the appearance of such a journal on such a topic is long overdue in view of the worldwide eruption of writings on garden history. Accordingly, Hunt declares that 'What this *Journal of Garden History* aims to provide for such a relatively new and fast-growing discipline is a regular forum in which the full potential of the subject may discover itself.' (p. 1) Himself is distinguished garden historian, Hunt has also put together an equally distinguished editorial advisory board of international authorities and his first issue contains contributions by such well-known gardenists as George L. Hersey and Peter Willis.

Besides the main aim of providing a forum and moral support for gardenists, the *Journal* aims to be international in scope, to publish documentary or original source material of which there is an example in volume one, number one, and to review books in all languages on all aspects of garden history. As an encouragement to potential contributors, Hunts says that many different things would be welcome - from new findings on garden architects or on garden sculpture or fountains, theatrical uses of gar-

dens or garden music, literary and pictorial accounts of gardens, garden plantings, the effects of fresh botanical knowledge on garden art and design, to the relations between gardens and larger landscapes or architecture.

The several articles in the first issue are of the traditional art-historical iconographic type. George L. Hersey's 'Ovid, Vico, and the Central Garden at Caserta,' for instance, traces the iconography of an eighteenth-century rococo Italian palatial garden. Its sources, Hersey explains, begin with Ovid's fables, chiefly those found in the *Metamorphosis*, and from that famous eighteenth-century reinterpreter of classical legends, Giambattista Vico.

Designed by Luigi Vanvitelli, the gardens were intended to be a complement to the palace. Hersey is concerned with the poetic meaning of the garden's central axis, its canal and its sculptural groups. The earliest of these groups, that of Diana and Actaeon, recounts the story by Ovid of how Actaeon was transformed into a stag after viewing Diana's nakedness. Hersey points out, though, that Ovid's story lacks a moral. That moral, he goes on to explain, is provided by Vico who declares that this fable means that in the future no man may look upon a naked woman other than his wife. The connection with the sculptural group arises from the knowledge that the myth of Actaeon appears at that time in human history when primitive hunting groups, seeking social stability, invented marriage.

A model of exacting and painstaking research, Hersey's study seems nevertheless doomed to obscurity. One hopes that in future issues of the *Journal of Garden History* Professor Hunt will entertain and encourage some of the newer art-historical methodologies. The audience for garden studies is small and will become even smaller if Hunt's readers do not respond quickly to his invitation with vigorous and imaginative suggestions and contributions.

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STEPHANIE BARRON and MAURICE TUCHMAN, eds. *The Avant-Garde in Russia, 1910-1930: New Perspectives*. Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980. 288 pp., illus., 27,50\$.

MARGIT ROWELL and ANGELICA ZANDER RUDENSTINE *Art of the Avant-Garde in Russia: Selections from the George Costakis Collection*. New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1981. 320 pp., illus., 17,00\$ (paper).

These books, the catalogues of major exhibitions, will be of some use to those who want to develop a general knowledge of the Russian avant-garde. The Los Angeles publication contains eighteen articles on a variety of topics, an interview with the linguist Roman Jakobson, a comprehensive bibliography, translations of statements by several artists, and chronologies. There are two essays in the Guggenheim publication, one by Rudenstine on the George Costakis Collection, the other, by Rowell, titled 'New Insights into Soviet Constructivism: Painting, Constructions, Production Art.' The catalogue itself, by Rudenstine, is divided into seven sections, each with comprehensive notes. Both books are profusely illustrated and contain biographical entries on the artists included in each exhibition. While the quality of the illustrations is generally superior in the Guggenheim book, the biographical entries in the Los Angeles book are more complete.

There was considerable interaction among the artists of Russia and Europe in the first decades of the century. Of the forty artists selected for the Los Angeles exhibition, for example, a few, including Chagall and Kandinsky, have a prominent position in the history of European art. Fifteen of the artists studied or worked in Europe before World War I and eleven, including Gabo, Goncharova and Larionov, emigrated to the West before the mid-1930s. Contemporary European works were shown in Russia;

such major texts as Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Gleizes' and Metzinger's *Cubism*, and Italian Futurist manifestoes were translated into Russian soon after they were written. By 1930, exhibitions of contemporary Russian art had been shown in Paris, Berlin, Venice, Cologne, Brussels and New York, and Malevich's *The Non-Objective World* had been published in Europe.

From the latter part of the 1930s through the 1950s, for reasons both aesthetic and political, interest in the art of the Russian avant-garde languished in the West. With Ad Reinhardt's interest in Malevich, and with the rise of Minimalism in the United States during the 1960s, however, the Russians were seen as precursors of a contemporary art. Flavin (who dedicated a series of work to Tatlin), Judd, Andre, LeWitt and Morris, like earlier Russian artists, made art through principles of construction ('The idea is the machine that makes the art,' wrote LeWitt) rather than through composition, using their materials to create works whose simple, geometric forms often prompt complex visual and intellectual responses.

Maurice Tuchman interviewed some of the Minimalists and several other artists for 'The Russian Avant-Garde and the Contemporary Artist,' his contribution to the Los Angeles book. He points out

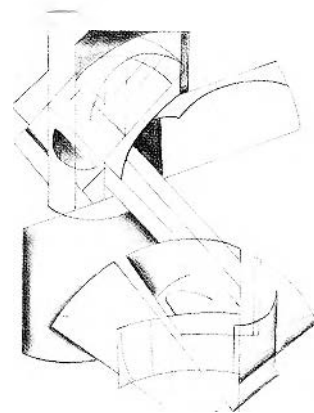


FIGURE 4. Alexandr Rodchenko, *Untitled*, 1917-19. Charcoal on paper. New York, The Guggenheim Museum.