Every Man his Own Publisher


The author's interest in parachuting and hang gliding led to his writing a book on the subject, but finding no publisher or banker to support his work himself, he published the work himself. One can only admire his persistence. The volume sold well, and Poynter has now written and published over a dozen volumes, for a total (by his claim) of over 1.5 million copies sold, one title alone having sold over 125,000 copies. So, his success has induced him to tell others in these two works about his methods, his 'secrets of writing, printing and selling' your own book; and these in turn bid fair to becoming best sellers too: *The Self-Publishing Manual* was first published in 1979, and a 'revised, third edition' is advertised for 1980 publication. The 'editions', says Poynter, are small, allowing for frequent revision.

An increasing number of writers are finding it difficult to get their work accepted by established publishers, because the sharp rise in costs of editing, designing, and printing by traditional methods makes the unit cost of marginal works prohibitive. The rapid multiplication of small publishers in Canada today is one result. New methods of typing, layout, reproduction, and binding make it possible to manufacture small print-runs relatively cheaply. Poynter explains, in these two volumes, how it can be done. The books themselves are exemplars, of course, of his methods, and what one finds is that they are an effective means of distributing information, rather than being the best words in the best form. The price levied against the reader is professional appearance; neither book is ever likely to win a design award. Still, we live in a new age of communications, and 'How to Paste up and Reproduce Books Instantly Using your Copy Shop' (the subtitle of *Publishing Short-Run Books*) will have a strong appeal to many. I note sadly the loose wording: 'Revised Edition' on the cover of *Self-Publishing* becomes 'Second Printing Revised' on the verso of the title-page, and page 174 announces the 'revised, third edition'; while the colophon of *Short-Run Books* states 'second, revised printing' and the title-page verso says only 'First Edition'. A bibliographical nightmare, surely, but perhaps the old terminology cannot apply to books employing such modern tools as the word processor and 'Letraset'. Bibliographers, too, must change their ways! Well, at least these volumes are equipped with such useful appurtenances as glossaries, sources of further information (I won't say bibliographies), and indexes. If you are a frustrated author, then here's all you need to get yourself into print — of sorts.

REVIEW EDITOR

The Fine Arts


Produced from the databases of the *American Book Publishing Record Cumulative,*
1950-1977, and the 1979 January-June *Records*, this volume is intended to be a ‘... research tool ... for librarians and booksellers in special areas’ (p. ix).

For problems inherent in the use of this database and of the LC subject classification, the reader is referred to the review by Irene R. Schechter ([*ARLIS/NA Newsletter*, vol. 8 (summer 1980): pp. 143-144]).

The full entry, with imprint, series, LC class number, Dewey number, price, and ISBN, appears in the subject index, the largest section of the volume. There is an in-print index by title, with binding, price, ISBN, publisher, but without author. An author index and a title index refer to the page numbers in the subject section, where up to four columns of print need to be scanned to find the required entry. Books for children are included, and ‘Art Books’ is liberally interpreted. These four sections have no name references, Le Corbusier (if this is the first word of the title) in the title section will lead to the subject entries under Jeanneret-Gris.

There follow two new sections compiled specially for this volume, not formerly in the databases. The ‘Geographic Guide to Museums’ is arranged by country, then by name of the institution, with address. In case of identical names (e.g., ‘Pinacoteca Communale’, ‘Heimatmuseum’) the list must be scanned. To find institutions located in one city, the entire country needs to be checked. Canada has 251 entries, including twelve name references.

The ‘Permanent Collection Catalog Index’ is the most innovative feature. Arrangement is by title of the institution; imprint, ISBN, and price are given; for street address the ‘Geographic Guide to Museums’ needs to be consulted. This listing is not covered by the subject index. For example, a catalogue on Henry Fuseli by the Tate Gallery will be found here under the Tate Gallery, but not in the subject index under Fuseli. These last two sections have name references.

While this work does not offer complete coverage, it appears to be a very useful introductory reference tool for smaller and medium-size public libraries, art galleries, booksellers, etc., especially where there is no ready access to more specialized tools such as the Répertoire international de la littérature de l’art. General readers, teachers, and antique collectors would also find it helpful for browsing and selection. Focusing attention on the wealth of material in museum and art gallery catalogues is a particularly welcome feature that adds much to its value.

**Eve Albrich**

(Dr. Albrich is Music/Art Librarian, Queen’s University, Kingston, and formerly Music Cataloguer with the same institution.)


Librarians and researchers in all fields of the fine arts will welcome this compilation, which is the fifth selective list to be published by the National Library of Canada in the period from 1974 to 1978. This union list complements the survey of fine arts library resources in Canada published by the National Library in 1978.

This compilation does not purport to be a comprehensive listing of all fine arts serials