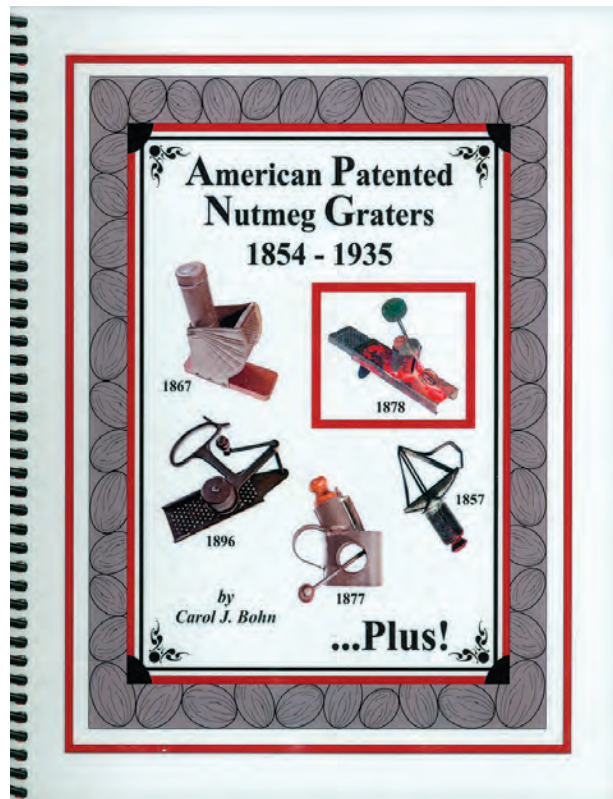


Books Received

by M.A.D. Staff

These are brief reviews of books recently sent to us. We have included ordering information for publishers that accept mail, phone, or online orders. For other publishers, your local bookstore or a mail-order house is the place to look.



American Patented Nutmeg Graters, 1854-1935... Plus! by Carol J. Bohn (Heritage Printers, 2015, 532 pp., spiral-bound, \$75 plus \$13.45 S/H, checks only, from Bohn's Antiques; see [www.bohnsantiques.com] or e-mail <carolbohn@embarqmail.com> for more information).

In flipping through the pages of this book, one might imagine the scent of nutmeg in holiday eggnog. But this book will make readers realize that there is more to nutmeg and nutmeg graters than meets the nose and eye. After 15 years of research and writing by the author, which included many visits to the U.S. Patent Office, this book, if not 100% complete, must nearly be, with its comprehensive information on American mechanical nutmeg graters.

It appears to have it all. Every page is filled with information. On the very first page, even before the table of contents, is "Anatomy of a Nutmeg," a naturalistic drawing of a nutmeg seed with cutaways and an image of the plant it grows on. The author begins the main content with a description of the basic parts of mechanical nutmeg graters. Patents fill the majority of the pages. Patent line drawings are reproduced, and for each grater there is a nice heading of basic information including patentee, location of patentee, composition and measurement (of grater), and evaluation (rarity guide), which is followed by the author's further description of the grater's parts and how it operates.

Interspersed throughout are collector stories and vignettes of fun, fact-filled nutmeg-related content. This spiral-bound, bulky reference guide will surely become the go-to reference on the subject. Four indexes, plus a good table of contents, make finding specific graters easier, especially since the book boasts 136 patents and 575 color photographs—just for starters. Two indexes are organized by patentee and patent year; there is a general alphabetical topical index; and an even better feature is the laminated visual index of "Selected Nutmeg Grater Thumbnails" in color.

Values are not given, but a rarity guide provides price ranges based on a grater's availability. Combination tools, mistaken nutmeg graters, fakes, collector tips, "Vignettes" such as "Fashionable Nutmeg Attire," "Nutmeg Grater Furniture," and "Time Line of Spice Islands," and much more are included. There is even a tied-on ribbon nutmeg bookmark for holding your place. The author apologizes for any typographical errors (we didn't notice any) and omissions, and she requests new information on rare graters as well as the opportunity to purchase them.

Mystery and Benevolence: Masonic and Odd Fellows Folk Art from the Kendra and Allan Daniel Collection by Stacy C. Hollander and Aimee E. Newell (American Folk Art Museum, 2016, 240 pp., softbound, \$38 plus S/H from American Folk Art Museum, [www.folkartmuseum.org] or [646] 783-5985).

Forty years ago Allan Daniel was the first dealer to bring the art of secret societies to antiques shows. "It was the time of love-ins, and the heart and hand symbol of the Odd Fellows spoke to me about love and benevolence," said Daniel about his passion for collecting the props used by fraternal organizations. He said he liked the red and gold colors and was first attracted to the pared-down, abstract designs of Odd Fellows plaques, heart and hand staffs, and wooden axes painted black and gold. He went on to collect a lot more.

Leaf through the fully illustrated catalog for the American Folk Art Museum exhibition that closed on May 8 and look for the kinship in the graphic language of symbols used by fraternal societies and those used for contemporary logos and by contemporary artists. For examples, see the sun logo used by CBS *Sunday Morning*, or the heart in "I Love New York," or Damien Hirst's skull paved with diamonds.

This catalog tells us that these timeless symbols, taken from medieval emblem books, were used in the late 19th and early 20th century as the vocabulary to initiate the common man into fraternal societies, where he found friendship, love, and truth that directed his life.

Allan Daniel and his wife, Kendra, have given their collection of Masonic and Odd Fellows folk art to the American Folk Art Museum, and this catalog documents their gift of more than 180 examples of what Daniel calls an underappreciated area of American folk art. Although the majority of the works are by anonymous hands, some are now documented to specific makers.

Stacy C. Hollander of the American Folk Art Museum places the Daniel collection in relationship to other American folk art, such as a Baltimore album quilt, a hooked rug, and a Shaker spirit drawing in the collection of the museum. She traces the origin of some of the symbols used by the fraternal societies to emblem books printed in the 16th century that were filled with Christian and moral symbols that could be understood without text. She suggests that fraternal organizations created an art that is "not unlike any other American folk art that has emerged from an insular community."

Aimee E. Newell, director of collections at the Scottish Rite Masonic Museum and Library in Lexington, Massachusetts, writes about American fraternalism. By 1900 six million men belonged to more than 250 fraternal groups in the United States. Initiation involved rituals, and Newell discusses the Masonic and Odd Fellows iconography used in the rituals, making the artifacts meaningful. Newell also identifies some makers. For example Ann Sisco, who made and sold a Masonic apron in the Daniel collection, was the widow of a Baltimore trimmings maker who advertised in the *Baltimore Sun* on May 13, 1846, that she was continuing her husband's business. A carpenter, James Crozier, made a marquetry table with a shield marked with "FLT" and "IOOF," a heart and hand, an all-seeing eye, and a three-link chain, all symbols of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. "FLT" stands for friendship, love, and truth.

This illustrated catalog of paraphernalia ranging from a "guard robe" to gravestones decorated with one of many symbols is a guide that will enhance aesthetic appreciation and provide a record of a collection, although the exact meaning and function of these objects still remains mysterious.

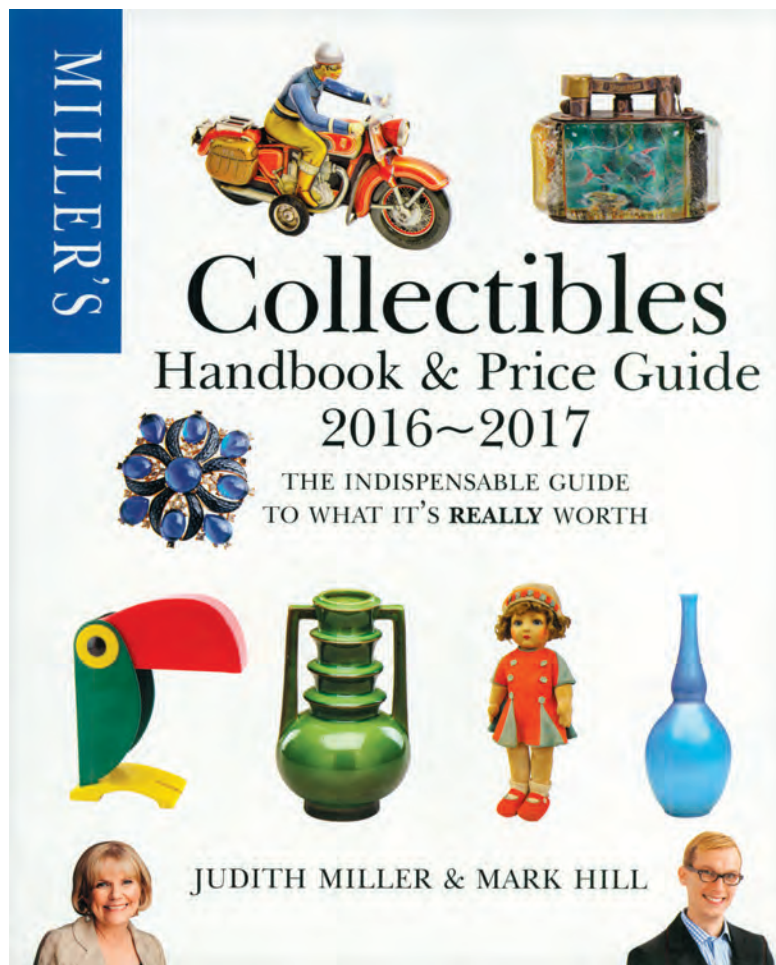
L. S-C.



Collectibles Handbook & Price Guide 2016-2017 by Judith Miller and Mark Hill (Miller's, 2016, 432 pp., soft-bound, \$27.99).

This price guide to collectibles covers the international market for everything from advertising pieces to wine collectibles. With 4000 new items featured, this guide is like a primer on collectibles. It highlights what is doing well or worth the investment in the marketplace. Each item is described and includes a price range of what you can expect to pay. There are sidebars throughout that explain why something is in or what makes a piece valuable or worth taking a second look at.

Each item has come from an auction house, a dealer, or a private collector. Letter codes with each item are keyed to the list of sources in the back. Also in the back of the book are directories of websites for selected auction houses, specialty dealers, antiques centers and shops, and collectors' clubs. A note with tips for buying online, along with a list of reputable online buying sites and resources (including Miller's site), is also included.



Emerging from the Shadows: A Survey of Women Artists Working in California, 1860-1960 by Maurine St. Gaudens (Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2015, 1341 pp. in four volumes, hardbound, \$59.99 plus S/H for each volume from Schiffer Publishing, [www.schifferbooks.com] or [610] 593-1777).

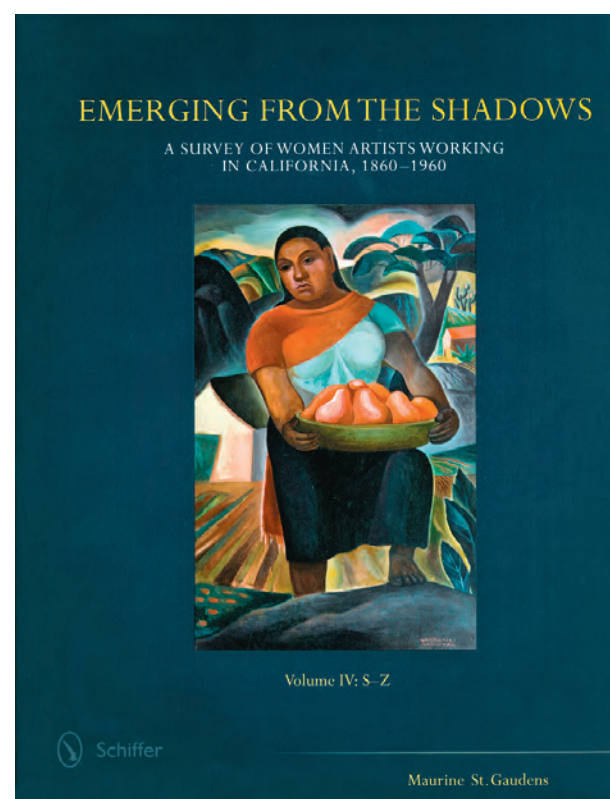
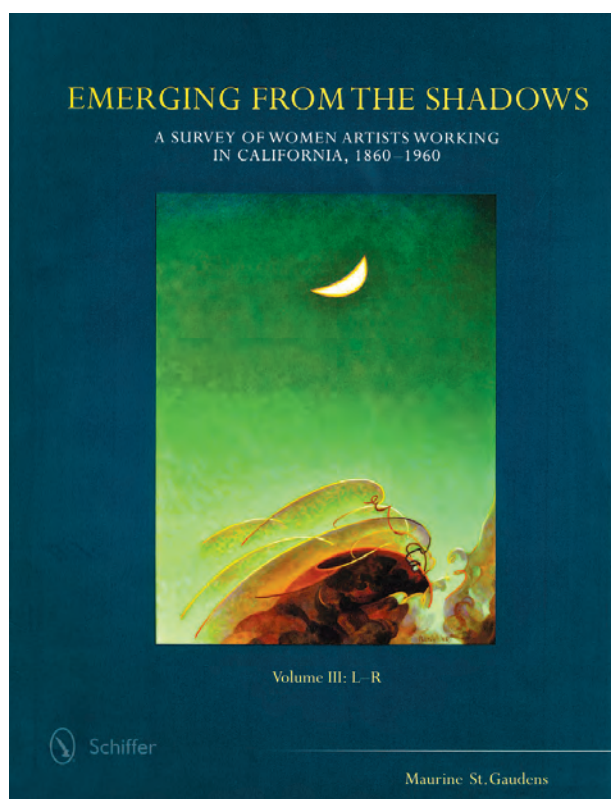
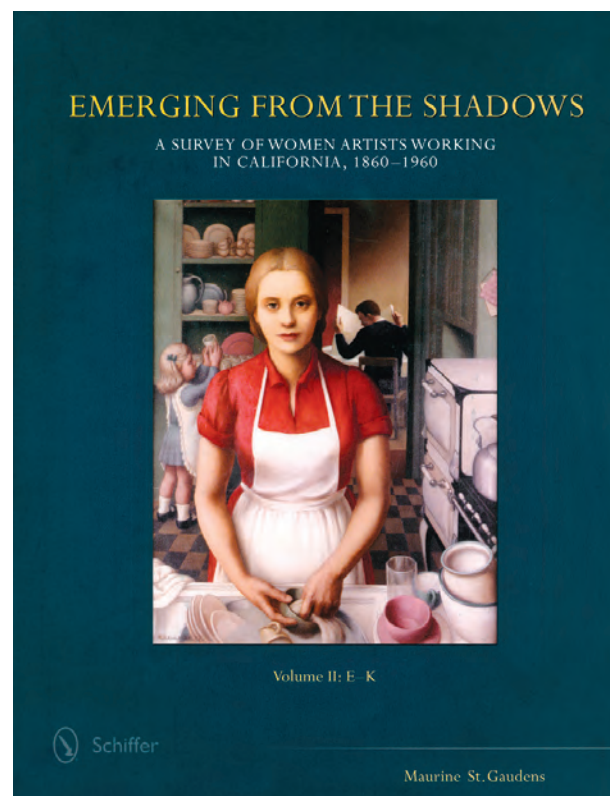
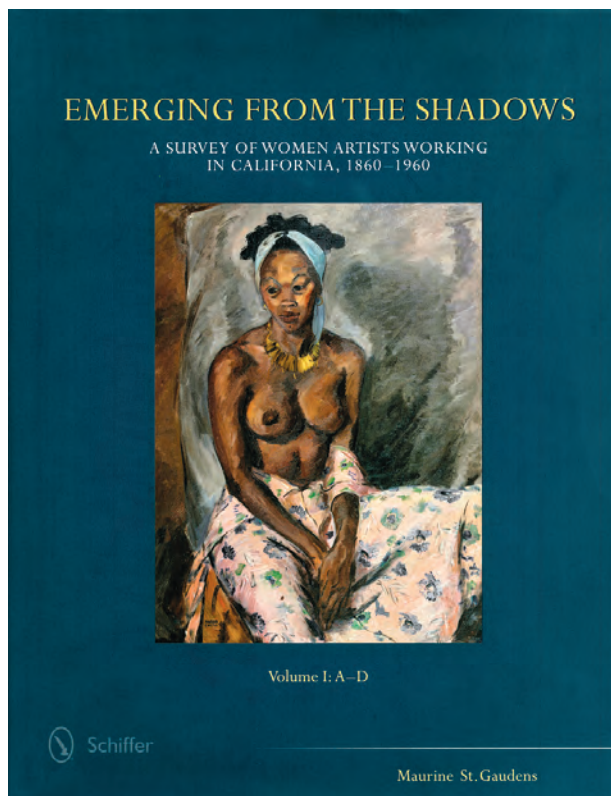
These four volumes present 320 women artists who lived, worked, or studied for at least 15 years in California between 1860 and 1960. The research undertaken to complete these books was a “journey of discovery” for the editor, an art conservator, and for the researchers and writers who contributed the biographies. Many of the artists are largely unknown, but they are featured side by side with better-known artists. Inaccuracies of names, dates, etc. were corrected through research using original documentation found in libraries, newspaper archives, and art collection and art school websites, as well as by talking with family members who filled in gaps.

These books do much to elevate and celebrate women artists. Why so many of these artists have gone largely unnoticed is discussed in an essay that touches on the social status and societal views of women. Sometimes women moved, changed their names, or went missing from the art world.

Photographs of some of the artists are included. Full-color examples of each artist’s work were chosen based on how they represented the artist’s oeuvre. Photographs of signatures as they appear on artworks are included.

What you will find are well-traveled and educated women who also taught, studied, and worked diligently at their art; who married, divorced, perhaps remarried, or remained single; and who raised families or lived with family or lived alone. What is extraordinary is not just the breadth of women and their experiences but the depth and breadth of their work, which ranges from the realism of the 19th century to the Modernism of the 20th century and represents many of the “schools” and “isms” that influenced artists across the world. Many worked under the Works Progress Administration.

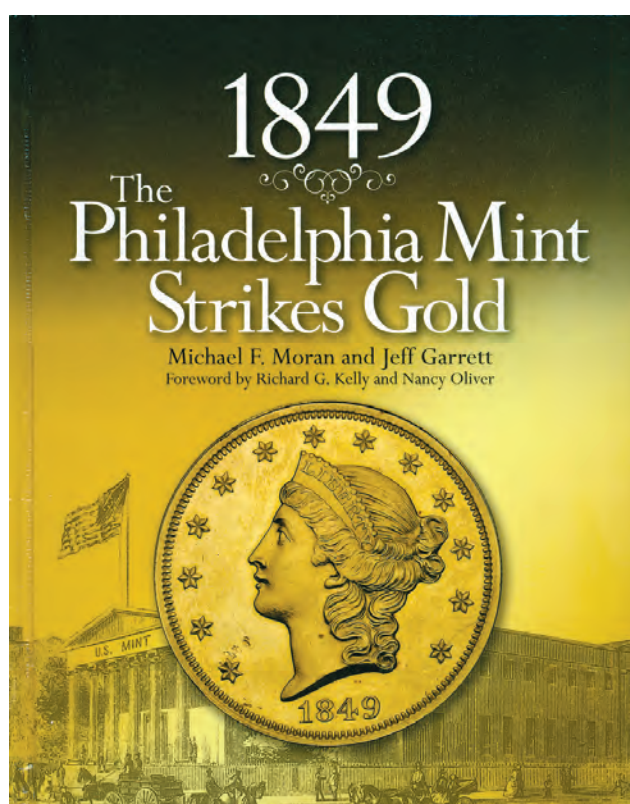
This publication is to be celebrated, as it celebrates women artists who worked in California and brings them out of the shadows and puts them together in one place for easy discovery and research. It is the editor’s hope that this will bring other artists into the light. Each volume has a complete index for all four volumes, which are divided into four fairly equal sizes alphabetically. This series should have a lasting impact on the recognition and understanding of the contributions of women artists everywhere.



1849: The Philadelphia Mint Strikes Gold by Michael F. Moran and Jeff Garrett (Whitman Publishing, LLC, 2016, 346 pp., hardbound, \$49.95 from Whitman Publishing, LLC, [www.whitman.com] or [800] 546-2995).

The history of the Philadelphia Mint is rife with difficulties, successes, political maneuvers, and changes in leadership. This book relates the fascinating details of the mint’s history and how the discovery of gold in California shook the mint’s “foundation” so much that its survival at the time was uncertain.

Researcher Michael Moran and gold coin specialist Jeff Garrett tell the story of the mint’s survival in a very readable and enlightening style. Hundreds of color images—many of which have not been published for years—highlight the textbook-like volume. Also included is a record of double eagles from 1849 to 1866 that are in the Smithsonian. The long section of notes and the lengthy bibliography show the depth of research and sources used. U.S. history buffs and collectors of gold coins should find this a fascinating volume to add to the bookshelf.



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