The Art of Placemaking: Interpreting Community Through Public Art and Urban Design

by Ronald Lee Fleming

This expertly researched book makes a radical case for accessible public art that fosters a powerful civic experience of connection to place. The author advocates narrative, site-specific public art that engages the popular imagination through common references to history, folklore, culture and geography, and demonstrates how the integration of approachable art with local landscape, architecture and urban design can facilitate identification with locale. Dozens of case studies of spectacular and innovative works throughout the United States are accompanied by practical information, cost and policy analysis, artist interviews, examples of failures and major controversies, and strategies for the future, making this book an essential reference for anyone involved with transforming and improving our public spaces.

Includes small-scale and citywide projects that are relevant both to local community groups and major city art programmes around the world. Features public art projects since the 1990s, including the integration of public art in urban design, historic interpretation, street furniture, transit-station and roadway-corridor design, mural towns and more. An invaluable resource for artists, architects, urban planners and teachers, as well as non-professionals seeking to bring art into their communities.

About the Author: Ronald Lee Fleming, AICP, is an award-winning, widely published expert on urban design, public art, historic preservation and environmental education.

Find it on Amazon.com
The American Spirit: Meeting the Challenge of September 11

by LIFE

During the most trying times, LIFE has provided us with images that help us understand, remember, and renew. Following in the footsteps of One Nation, The American Spirit goes back to chronicle the triumph after the tragedy. - An inspiring portrait of a nation and world coming together in sadness, pride, and above all, resolve-vowing never again to allow such a tragedy to occur. - Return to the most tragic moment in American history and meet the heroes and survivors. Reflect on how the nation has responded and overcome the tragedy. - Written by the editors of One Nation.

About the Author: LIFE has long been one of the country's preeminent publishers of books and periodicals, and is renowned for its presentation of photography. The American Spirit, the sixth LIFE book to be published in 2002, carries on this tradition. Many of the world's finest photographers are represented, and several of them have created new essays specifically for this volume. The American Spirit was produced by the same team of editors who in 2001 published One Nation, which spent five months on the New York Times Best Sellers list, reaching #1 in mid-December, and raised funds for the victims' charities.

Partial proceeds from the sale of this book will be contributed to the Twin Towers Fund.

Find it on Amazon.com

Ironwork Today 2: Inside & Out

by Jeffrey B. Snyder

Hundreds of beautiful color photos display the varied, impressive iron artwork from today's artist-blacksmiths. See a variety of styles, from Modern to Victorian, in original works for homes, offices, and public spaces. This metal art ranges in scope from massive public monuments to small, everyday objects and includes sculpture, gates, railings, furniture, lighting fixtures ranging from chandeliers to lamps and candleholders, doors, locks, and more. Concise text introduces each artist and their work. This book is the second in a series pioneered by the late Dona Meilach and provides readers familiar with her work with a new look at some of the artists they have come to know as well as an introduction to artists not previously known. This book will quickly become a prized possession, critical reference, and inspiration for homeowners, designers, artists, and blacksmiths alike.

Find it on Amazon.com

Ironwork Today: Inside & Out

by Dona Z. Meilach

Here is an exciting foray into the world of the artist-blacksmith. Dona Z. Meilach discovers the growing numbers of men and women who revel in lighting up a forge and shaping hot, malleable iron into beautiful, useful
objects. Blacksmiths today make both monumental and modest architectural accompaniments, from public art to an infinite number of items we encounter every day. With this book, you will gain an appreciation of the medium and its creators, and realize that blacksmiths do much more than shoe horses. Over 480 color photographs highlight objects for indoor and outdoor use, including fences, railings, gates, doors, sculpture, furniture, lighting fixtures, candleholders, and more. Some are truly modern in style while others are inspired by historical references, such as Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Craftsman, and Victorian styles. today's blacksmiths, designers, artists, and homeowners will find unparalleled inspiration for creating unique yet practical surroundings.

Find it on Amazon.com

The Contemporary Blacksmith (Hardcover)
by Dona Z. Meilach (Author), Daryl Meier (Introduction), Stephen Bondi (Contributor)

This important new book tackles the burgeoning revival of the blacksmith's art. Author Dona Meilach has brought together over 500 works by nearly 200 artist-craftsmen from sixteen countries to illustrate the unprecedented activity in modern ironwork that has led to its blossoming into a serious art form. You'll learn several techniques using hot and cold forming with the results clearly shown. You'll be able to recognize how a fence, railing, grille, table, chair, knife, and other items evolve, and better appreciate their design and workmanship. Each chapter provides background for the type of objects shown--architectural ironwork, sculpture, furniture, containers and vessels, lighting fixtures and candleholders, fireplace accessories, wind vanes, household and liturgical items, and the incredible knives made of Damascus steel. You'll find ample information for how and where to begin your own study in this extensive resource list of organizations, Internet sources, publications, museums, and educational opportunities. The Contemporary Blacksmith undoubtedly should be found in the libraries of every metalworker, art educator, architect, interior designer, ironwares collector, and crafts person.

About the Author: Dona Z. Meilach is the author of over forty books on art-craft related topics including metal, stone, wood, fibers, collage, printmaking, and others. Dona holds a Master's Degree in Art History from Northwestern University, has created art in many media, and taught art and art history.

Find it on Amazon.com

Architectural Ironwork (Schiffer Book for Collectors)
by Dona Z. Meilach

This new book showcases a vast array of ironwork commissioned for new commercial and residential building projects. Traditional styles in modern settings and designs that reach for new visual impact help to redefine ironwork's status in our current society. There are over 375 spectacular
examples from more than 100 of today’s top blacksmiths, supplemented with historical works from 15 countries, some derived from old French and English ironwork. These include doors and hardware, staircases and railings, and gates and fences. This book will inspire architects, builders, homeowners, and artist-blacksmiths with the wealth of beautiful ideas it contains.

About the Author: Dona Z. Meilach has written over 85 books, more than half on art subjects, and she contributes articles to popular magazines and Internet sites. She lives in Carlsbad, California.

Find it on Amazon.com

Back to the top of page ↑
The range of public art in The Art of Placemaking is extensive. What’s even more impressive is the book’s encyclopedic scope. Fleming, who has worked to enhance townscapes in the US and other countries for 35 years, has a deep knowledge of art that’s intended to serve public purposes. He devotes many of the book’s 384 information-packed pages to specific projects, but he doesn’t stop there. He blames the tabula rasa approach of Modern Movement design education for producing “dead spaces that tell no tales.” Art selection groups, he notes, have often plunked abstract sculptures onto lifeless plazas in front of major buildings, disappointing the public. Fleming identifies four urban design objectives that he believes can “reclaim the dead spaces of the Modernist era.”