



Rachel Carren, Bruce W. Pepich and Lena Vigna 2011 *Terra Nova: Polymer Art at the Crossroads*. Racine, WI, Racine Art Museum: 140 pp., hardcover \$35. Available at www.ramartorg.

Terra Nova: Polymer Art at the Crossroads is the companion catalog to the much-anticipated exhibition of the same name, which opened at Racine Art Museum in October 2011. Presenting the largest museum collection of polymer clay works to date, the show was a welcome validation for the many artists who have been working in the medium for over three decades.

The catalog opens with a foreword by Lena Vigna, detailing how the Polymer Collection Project came to donate a large number of pieces to the museum, and Racine's visions for the future of polymer art being showcased on the museum level. An essay by polymer historian and scholar Rachel Carren follows. Carren's piece is extensive, a well-researched document tracing the path of polymer developments and innovations, as well as individual artists and the skills they contributed and honed over the years.

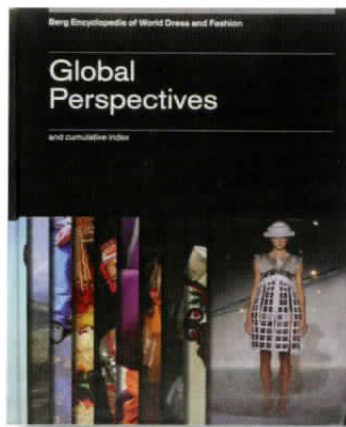
Bruce Pepich's insightful interview with Polymer Collection Project head Elise Winters, and an enjoyable conversation between Pepich and Vigna on the polymer "landscape" round out the essay section of the book.

Then we get to the goods: the more than one hundred thirty photographs included in this catalog. The first photographic section covers what Racine calls the "Boundary Breakers"—those artists who have played a particularly special role in the medium's

development. Bonnie Bishoff and J.M. Syron, Jeffrey Lloyd Dever, Kathleen Dustin, Steven Ford and David Forlano, Tory Hughes, Cynthia Toops, Pier Voulkos, and Elise Winters each have a section, with a brief introduction and resumé complemented by large-scale photographs of their work. The images are beautifully shot, crisp and clear and generally on white backgrounds that really showcase the works' colors, patterns and textures nicely.

The final section shares even more polymer artists in a gallery of work from the Polymer Collection Project. Here, other names in polymer get their due. Everything is clearly marked and captioned throughout the catalog, allowing those who missed seeing Terra Nova in person a glimpse into what was surely a fantastic and educational exhibition. This book is a must have for anyone interested in polymer clay.

Jill A. DeDominicis



Joanne B. Eicher and Phyllis G. Tortora (ed./assist. ed.) 2010 *Global Perspectives*. Vol. 10. *Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. Oxford, Berg Publishers: 605 pp., hardcover \$220. Available from Oxford University Press 800-445-9714 (U.S.).

The Berg Encyclopedia, a massive ten book set of six thousand pages, covers how the world dresses, with the last volume providing global perspectives. Divided into five sections, thirty-five primarily academic or museum scholars wrote forty-two articles on Overview, Forms of Dress Worldwide, Dress and the Arts Worldwide, Fashion Worldwide, and Dress and Fashion

Resources Worldwide, most illustrated with black and white images. (These same and other images are available in color if one subscribes to the online version, either monthly or annually. Online versions are supposed to be updated at least twice a year.) Each article has references and further reading, but due to the encyclopedia's style, there are no citations within the text. Additional features include a useful sixteen page timeline of dress, an issue index and an analytical cumulative index for the entire set of encyclopedias, which runs over two hundred fifty pages.

Even within this one volume, containing only about three hundred twenty pages of articles and purposed with providing overviews of the complex world of dress and fashion, there are a myriad of diverse and fascinating topics: research approaches to this vast topic, nudity, beads (written by this reviewer), scented dress, work dress, religious dress, ceremonial dress, dress and identity, how an item of clothing becomes assimilated into a society (an especially intriguing presentation by John Vollmer), wearable technology, dress in art, dress in the performing arts, flower imagery in dress, cosplay, history of fashion and related topics, the fashion industry, its magazines, fashion as it relates to interiors, fashion cities, secondhand clothing (informative and thought provoking), ethical fashion and ecofashion, globalization and dress, intelligent textiles, virtual worlds, dress and fashion, an entire section on dress and fashion in museums and exhibitions, and finally, dress and fashion education.

While encyclopedias used to be almost a household item, things have changed markedly with the internet. The World Dress set is undoubtedly primarily aimed at institutions, as few individuals would have the budget for all the volumes, at about ten times the cost of *Global Perspectives*. Perhaps if one were a specialist for a certain area of the world, it would be worthwhile to buy that particular volume, although culturally diverse Asia is covered by three volumes. For an institution, it may be of more utility to subscribe online, so one could have the benefit of color illustrations, ease of use by everyone in their system and periodic online updates.

Robert K. Liu