

tings as museum displays) lies behind the idea of France's famous 'civilizing mission' and lends a distinctive tone to representations of its colonial past.

"While Chirac and Kerchache were passing over Christopher Columbus in order to celebrate Taino Indians in the Petit Palais; while presidential committees were working on a plan to give cultural products from Africa, Oceania and the Americas their due in Paris museums; and while the curators at the Louvre were swallowing the idea of pagan fetishes within shouting distance of the Mona Lisa," a new museum was being formed.

But the museum was about, of course, quietude over information: "The dominant feeling within the committees was that aesthetic contemplation was best achieved through quiet communion with the object and that the distraction of ethnographic information should be kept at a distance. Kerchache was a particularly outspoken advocate of this position." This style of interpretation leads to the kind of repartee heard on *60 Minutes* when it's a particularly good segment:

Kerchache's manifesto . . . that African objects were "castrated" when they entered an ethnographical laboratory was countered indignantly by Marie-Claude Dupré [of the Musée de l'Homme]: "He seems to think we have constipated brains," she retorted. "The proposed exhibition in the Louvre will amount to nothing less than dildos for tired intellectuals."

All of this backstory foreshadows Price's thoughtful review of the MQB as a museum that has a "general tendency to privilege harmony and nation-to-nation diplomacy over social criticism and attention to the interests of particular ethnic groups." With Perry Mason precision, she uses the words of the museum-makers who seemingly have waived their right to avoid self-incrimination and issue their own indictments:

CONTINUED ON PAGE 82

BOOKSHELF

Interpreting Our Heritage

By Freeman Tilden

"Interpretation is an art, which combines many arts, whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable." This principle is one of six supported in Freeman Tilden's classic 1957 text, *Interpreting Our Heritage*. It has remained a standard in the field, guiding interpreters who shape the experience of millions of visitors to America's state and municipal parks, monuments, battlefields, historic houses and museums of all types and sizes. The fourth edition is updated and expanded with new photography and six additional essays.

Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. 224 pp., hardcover, \$39.95; softcover, \$15.95.

Exhibit Makeovers: A Do-It-Yourself Workbook for Small Museums

By Alice Parman and Jeffrey Jane Flowers

Watch out, reality TV: Exhibition makeovers could be the new craze! This handbook offers step-by-step instruction to update and renovate tired, faded or merely disorganized museum displays. Guidance is geared for three types of makeover: a single-case exhibit, a gallery or a small museum. Includes worksheets and careful instructions that help you choose what to redo and how—including how to determine the story and the facts, arrange and install the physical objects, design labels and overall presentation and solicit visitor feedback and participation.

Lanham, Md.: AltaMira, 2008. 144 pp., hardcover, \$90; softcover, \$23.95.

Portal to the Corps: Chronicling the National Museum of the Marine Corps

Edited by Jessica del Pilar

At the National Museum of the Marine Corps, even a visit to the museum café helps tell the Marines' story: Tun

Tavern is a reconstruction of the 18th-century public tavern in Philadelphia where the first Colonial Marines were allegedly recruited by Captain Samuel Nicholas. This lavishly illustrated book chronicles the design and building of the museum just outside Washington, D.C., inaugurated in November 2006. Images of models, renderings and photographs document the design by architect Curtis W. Fentress, which was based on the iconic image of Marines raising the flag on Iwo Jima, and attest to the powerful role of architecture in constructing a museum's message. Features essays by key individuals who guided building from conception through completion.

Victoria, Australia: Images Publishing, 2007. 240 pp., hardcover, \$60.

Entering Cultural Communities: Diversity and Change in the Nonprofit Arts

Edited by Diane Grams and Betty Farrell

If your goal is to attract more racially, ethnically and economically diverse audiences at your museum (or orchestra, dance company, theater, library or other cultural center), then this collection of essays is for you. It offers examples of arts and cultural leaders from 85 nonprofit organizations "looking beyond [traditional audiences and patrons] to embrace the needs, interests, and spending habits of a broader American public." Case studies, drawn from large institutions—such as the Smithsonian, the Walker Art Center and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston—and small, such as the Armory Center for the Arts, AS220, Appalshop and the Western Folklife Center, touch on efforts to draw on existing connections with communities as well as to create new ones.

New Brunswick, N.J., and London: Rutgers University Press, 2008. 298 pp., hardcover, \$24.95; softcover, \$19.95.

