

rainbows in particular and spectral sequences in general, focusing upon the meaning of color (both physically and metaphysically) from ancient to modern times" and "accompanies exhibitions of art, musical and dramatic presentations, demonstrations of scientific and technological phenomena, creative art projects, religious festivals and field trips sponsored by art museums, science museums, civic agencies, schools, churches, performing artists, businesses, community centers and parks."

The above exchange, taken from cover notes and an accompanying press release, gives some indication of the intent of what must have been a colorful and enlightening amalgam of rainbowneries at the San Francisco Fine Arts Museums. Those of us who missed the festivities, however, must make do with *The Rainbow Book*.

Comprised of seven chapters, each printed on a different color paper and arranged in spectral order (remember Roy G. Biv?) this unusual exhibition catalog presents discussions of color in increasing levels of complexity, from red to violet. The chapter titles ("Art, Myth and Magic"; "Paintings, Prints and Poems"; "Light, Color and the Stars"; "The Music of the Spheres"; "Symbols: The Colors of our Consciousness"; "Auras: The Rainbows around our Bodies"; "The Rainbow Show: A Scrap Book") and some of the authors included (Frank Oppenheimer, Dante, Edgar Cayce and Paramahansa Yogananda), indicate the scope of the book, which museum director Ian White calls "a veritable encyclopedia of information about rainbows."

The Rainbow Book is more than an encyclopedia; it is an experience. It may not tell us everything we have always wanted to know about color; but it covers almost everything. And what is not included in the text is listed in the fascinating but short bibliography.

Without attempting to discuss criti-

cally each offering in this collection of rainbowana, suffice it to say that such a volume would have many uses in a museum library. The succinct discussions of "How Do We See?" and "What is Light, What is Color?" by Faber Birren could be invaluable in explaining visual phenomena to an art museum's volunteer docents, for instance, while the more scientific discussions of "Interference" (Frank Oppenheimer) and "Harmony and Harmonies" (Evans G. Valens) are particularly relevant to science museums.

Obviously, the book was not intended as a complete text on the subject of color. It is, however, a fascinating compendium of color theories and discussions. The only thing missing is a pot of gold inside the back cover—
Bruce H. Evans △

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The Rainbow Book, edited by F. Lanier Graham. The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, with Shambhala, 1975. 256 pp., illus., paperbound. \$7.95. *Question:* When is an exhibition catalog not an exhibition catalog? *Answer:* When it is "a collection of essays and illustrations devoted to