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Cabinets Of Wonder



Synopsis

Skulls, butterflies, hunting trophies, ancient Egyptian artifacts, the alleged skeletons of mythological creatures, and many other mysterious oddities fill cabinets of wonder. A centuries-old tradition developed in Europe during the Renaissance, cabinets of wonder (also known as curiosity cabinets) are once again in fashion. Shops, restaurants, and private residences echo these cabinets in their interior design, by making use of the eclectic vintage objects commonly featured in such collections. Cabinets of Wonder showcases exceptional collections in homes and museums, with more than 180 photographs, while also explaining the history behind the tradition, the best-known collections, and the types of objects typically displayed. Offering both a historical overview and a look into contemporary interior design, this extravagantly illustrated book celebrates the wonderfully odd world of cabinets of wonder.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Christine Davenne is a lecturer in fine arts at the IUFM d'Aquitaine and is the author of the book *Modernité du cabinet de curiosités*. Christine Fleurent photographs regularly for women's magazines and advertising and has contributed to numerous books, including *La Cuisine des parfums* and *La Maison de Chocolat*.

It is hard to know where to start with this book - it is filled with every mystery and treasure you can imagine. This book describes Cabinets of Wonder, and this book is a wonder itself. You can truly be transported whether reading about historical or modern wunderkammers, or just flipping through the

pages to admire the magical collections within. This book begins by examining the historic origins of the collections that comprise a wonder cabinet as we know it today. As documented, the collections are dictated by the collecting whims of the assembler and may contain anything the collector found fascinating, curious, exotic or desirable. A collection may include natural objects, artwork, souvenirs, scientific instruments, ornaments, specimens, memento mori, musical instruments, medical oddities - any object that inspires curiosity. This book documents historical collectors and their collections, and some of their motivations for assembling objects into a collection. They are motivated by a desire to understand the world around them, but also by fame, social status and obsession. These people are royalty, scholars, artists, scientists and eccentrics. Their collections and the labor it took to construct them make for fascinating reading. The book also explains how the curiosity cabinets evolved into museums as we know them today. This book also does a thorough job of reporting on modern day wonder cabinets and their place in contemporary art. I have purchased a few books about wonder cabinets recently hoping that they would include modern examples, but this is the only book to do so, and I was delighted by what was included. Although I enjoyed the text of this book tremendously, it is the wonderful photography and illustrations that make this book so satisfying. On every page you are treated to compositions of visually inspiring objects. There are skulls, bones, marble statues, taxidermy, artwork, furniture, reliquaries, globes, hides, eggs, shells, insects, diagrams, specimens, artifacts, monsters, treasures, composite creatures, grottoes, and monsters - every marvel you could hope to see in a curiosity cabinet. You can spend many hours getting lost in this fascinating book.

Wonderful contextualization of the tradition and history of Wonder Cabinets, and their relationship to our concept of museums. The work overall seemed somewhat rambling and, in my opinion, could have used a bit better organization (especially in putting the illustrations near what the author is talking about), but it is still well worth the read and the journey on which it takes you. Whether you are just looking for an interesting, copiously illustrated coffee-table book, or are serious about the history of our musing collections I highly recommend this book. I do wish it had finished a bit stronger with how the wonder cabinet tradition is continuing in modern art - it did mention this, but in an offhand way that was more comment than commentary. And a note about the binding and covering - it is more fragile than other books, so take care with rough handling (some kind of paper that easily scratches, tears, scuffs, etc.).

The book is actually bigger than I thought it would be! It came with A4 size and hard-binded red

cover, very beautifully printed. At first, I was thinking about check it out and return it if i don't like but i instead added it to my collection! Apart from photos of oddities, it also explains history of this tradition and types of objects collected. Highly recommended!

Museum like stuff, very well preserved and beautifully displayed. A must see for collectors of oddities

If you like looking at peoples collections of things and cabinets they are kept in, then this is the book for you. I wasn't sure I would like it but, took a chance on it and thoroughly enjoyed the many pictures and text.

Bought this for my father and he liked it. He likes macabre collections and antiquities. This nicely bound book has all the pictures of butterflies, skulls, shells and art from all sorts of sources. This book is beautiful and morose depends on your taste.

This is a very high quality book that looks amazing. I bought it as inspiration for a work project, and when it's sitting on my desk everyone wants to flip through it. It's filled with tons of weird, curious images, the book cover itself looks very premium, and the overall design is top notch.

A wonderfully designed book full of gorgeous photos of curiosity cabinets and art inspired by them. As a modern-day collector, it inspired me quite a bit and I can see myself going back to it as an important reference.

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