

Market Your Book on Manhattan's Museum Mile

By Francine Silverman

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We tend to think of books in museum shops as only art books and monographs. A visit to Manhattan's Miracle Mile on Fifth Avenue between 82nd and 105th Streets proves otherwise. www.ny.com/museums/mile.html .

The charming museum shop at el Museo del Barrio, 1230 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10029 at 104th Street carries fiction and non-fiction by and about Latinos. The adult books are in English or Spanish and many of the children's books are bi-lingual. Approximately 30% of merchandise is books under headings such as Latino Interest, Puerto Rico, Women's Studies, Spirituality, Cookbooks, and Music. Museum shop manager Ilana Stollman accepts books from all publishers. She has little experience with self-published books but is not averse to stocking them. Send her review copy or book catalogue. 212-831-7272, x130. www.elmuseo.org .

The Museum of the City of New York, 1220 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10029 (212-534-1672) is between 103rd and 104th Streets, three blocks north of Mt. Sinai Hospital. The museum shop is about 98% books, covering the five boroughs, although children's books include more general topics. A lot of the books are oversized and there are no guidebooks. www.mcnyc.org .

The Cooper Shop at the Jewish Museum, 1 East 92nd Street, (212-423-3211) has a host of books on Judaism. You must send your books to Israel Jaronoski, the book buyer, for him to make a decision. I hope you have better luck reaching him than I did (212-423-3312). www.thejewishmuseum.org .

The Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2 East 91 Street, and the National Academy of Design, 1083 Fifth Avenue, (212-369-4880) are often confused in people's minds because of the similarity of names. But, according to John M. Ravet, manager/book buyer at the National Academy of Design, the two are "radically different." "I answer this question several times a day," he says. The Cooper-Hewitt is applied design, he explains, while the National Academy, which was founded in 1825, follows a "traditional definition" – drawings, paintings, sculpture, etchings, architecture. The Academy also focuses on its 2100-member artists and architects - past and present. Small press, self-publishers and overseas press are welcome to submit books. "We tend to focus on books that are not found elsewhere. That's why we have small publishers." John adds that while monographs are plentiful, biographies of members are especially needed. You'll find a list of them at www.nationalacademy.org .

At Cooper-Hewitt's gift shop, there are books ranging from etchings of the 16th century to modern day design – be it textiles, table settings or castles. Moreover, unique book jackets are always welcome. According to the salesman, "The subject of the book doesn't matter if it has an unusual design concept." These include children's pop-up books and padded book jackets. A non-three-dimensional book has the text beginning on the front cover. Self-published and small press accepted. The book buyer is Chris Masaoay. (212-849-8355). <http://ndm.si.edu> .

The museum shop at the Guggenheim Museum, 1071 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10128 (89th Street), 212-423-3500, has books on early European to contemporary artists and architects who are in the permanent collection or have been featured in an exhibition at the museum. All books that fit in this category, regardless of publisher, are considered by book buyer Ed Fuqua. Send to him at 575 Broadway, New York, New York 10012. (212-423-3852). www.guggenheim.org .

The mother of all museum shops is at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10028 (main entrance on 82nd Street), 212-535-7710. This enormous bookstore carries books about artists and art history, travel, women's studies, gardening, and costumes, plus a small New York City corner. According to book buyer Marilyn Jensen, the majority of books come from major publishers. However, she will accept books from small publishers (no vanity press). Send to her at 6 E. 82nd Street, New York, NY 10028 (212-396-5535). Most of the books reflect the various departments in the museum, i.e., medieval art, ancient Egypt. www.metmuseum.org/store .

Not on Museum Mile but one block east between 74th and 75th Streets is the Whitney Museum. All the books in its gift shop are related to art, including technology, new media, film, video, audio, performance art, theory and criticism. Books by small publishers are welcome, but self-published books are doubtful. Send to book buyer, Michael Lagios (212-570-3613), at Whitney Museum of American Art, 945 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10021-2790. www.whitney.org .

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