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Cyclepedia: A Century Of Iconic Bicycle Design



Synopsis

For every way to ride, there's a bicycle to fit the need. An homage to the beauty of the bike, Cyclepedia showcases the innovations and legacies of bicycle design over the past century. Join longtime bike enthusiast and avid collector Michael Embacher for a tour of 100 bicycles, from the finest racing bikes and high-tech hybrids to the bizarrely specific (such as a bike designed to cycle on ice). Captivating photographs, detailed component lists, and anecdotal information illuminate the details that make each bicycle unique. Also including a foreword by cyclist and designer Paul Smith, Cyclepedia is the ultimate coffee-table book for devotees of the two-wheeled life.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is basically the best photo overview of bike design. The diversity depicted is inspiring. I just love a big bike book. Chronicle Books knows what they're doing -- they consistently pick great topics and execute them well. Whenever you see the "spectacles on a spine" you know you're in for a treat. (Say, I just heard there's now a "Cyclepedia App" available offering zoomable and 360-degree views of all the bikes! ...Plus extra historic footage. [...]) This book is very satisfying. Still, it has a couple aspects that make me hunger for the next big bike book... I suppose no bike book is exhaustive, and there's always room for more -- but a couple came close in their day (Richard's and Durry/Wadley's). This book has a couple aspects that might baffle a reader. First, the book is a presentation of one architect's amazing collection. This is mentioned nowhere. Michael Embacher's collection is world famous in a few ways, including because it has been touring on its own as an art

exhibit with bikes displayed on an amazing S-track near the ceiling of galleries. It's been quite an attraction. This exhibit is shown in a tiny sidebar pic in the book but not explained. Next, Embacher is not a bike buff per se, but a Viennese designer. He picked bikes that seemed quirky and cool to him. He was even accepting of failure. He went for audacity. If a laugh resulted, that was fine. Now, many of the bikes depicted are enduring classics. But there are so many amazing bike designs that both astonish and succeed which don't appear. I miss them! Goofy false-start bikes might be more satisfying if successes along similar lines are included. (For instance, it only brushes the ultra-creative world of recumbents.) Oh, to have seen a dozen more 'just right' bikes!

If you like to look at interesting & unusual bicycles this book is an outstanding value. The pictures are crisp studio portraits, several of which are poster-quality. This is an important record of bicycle innovation and an important addition to the library of any serious enthusiast. This book is a catalog of the author's personal collection of idiosyncratic 20th century bicycles. It is the only catalog of any bicycle collection currently available. The table of contents lists 97 bicycles. It is not a historic collection so much as a collection of 20th century bicycles; 71 of them are after 1976. The oldest bike is 1922, three are from the 1920s, five from the 1930s and five from the 1940s. The bike collection lists 38 racing (including 2 Cinellis, a Kestrel, and breath-taking Sabliere and Bianchi C-4 pages) 26 "urban", 24 unusual folding, 19 touring (which includes 2 Herse bikes and a Baines), 5 mountain bikes, 4 tandems. 2 cargo and 35 what it describes as "curiosity" bicycles, which include bicycles with spring frames, shaft drives and a 1996 two-wheel drive, to name a few. The collection is a catalog of the variety of human ingenuity developing different braking, gearing and frame designs. The photographs are high quality close-ups. The book emphasis is on the collection. The sometimes awkwardly translated text is casual and unfootnoted, like a museum display pointing out interesting details about the bikes rather than details about history. This is the second catalog of the Embacher collection. The first one was

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