
It has been apparent for a long time that the Pittsburgh area needed a good illustrated volume that identifies and provides historical background on the numerous statues and reliefs that adorn our streets, parks, and public buildings. How splendid is this company of mythical gods and adventurers, how plentiful are the male and female embodiments of valor and beauty, and how diverse is the host of animals, real and fabled. Carved children and lions have become the familiars of all our days and ways. In a wide variety of materials man has created another population of figures, incidents, and legends that are the records and surrogates of our own history and dreams.

Sculpture, great and small, is necessary to our existence, and since there is such a quantity of it, and human memory so often fails, guidebooks and photographic collections are needed to secure the identification of this vast gallery of images.

This latest handsome volume among contemporary sculpture books is a production of the University of Pittsburgh Press. The text is informative and graceful, illustrated with 182 photographs. The collaborators have amply proved their competence by achieving a highly commendable synthesis of words and images. As I have always been an aficionado of Pittsburgh sculpture, I have been aware of the project from the very beginning and I rejoice in its successful conclusion.

As David Wilkins, director of the University Art Gallery at the University of Pittsburgh, notes in his foreword to the book, "It may be a surprise to discover that aesthetic quality was not a determining factor in deciding what works to include. As a guidebook, the intent was to present works of public sculpture in Pittsburgh" whatever their merits. The carved monuments in private cemeteries have largely been excluded because there are so many of them that they would require a book of their own. Much architectural sculpture has not been included, except for such salient examples as the
friezes of _telamones_ in the round, executed in 1896 for the cornice of the Park Building at Fifth and Smithfield, or the classical reliefs of the City-County Building of 1916, or the seated lions of the Allegheny County Courthouse of 1887-1888. There are works of art of undoubted aesthetic merit in the book alongside mediocre pieces that speak just as eloquently concerning the history and character of the city.

The masterpieces, the _chefs d’oeuvre_, such as they are, are all in the book, well described and well illustrated in these bountiful pages. It is certainly a cliché, but when I first picked up the volume I had difficulty putting it down. It is rather like touring the city and finding an old friend on every corner. It is a book that could become a favorite on your Pittsburgh shelf. I suppose, though, that no anthology is ever quite complete for every reader. Where in this admirable compendium, for instance, is that small, low-relief portrait of William Shakespeare which is said to have come from the first theater building in Pittsburgh? It dates to 1813 and I presume still reposes in the garden court of the Old Post Office Museum, as well as in my memory of the “trivial, fond records” of Pittsburgh.

It would be redundant here to speak of Daniel Chester French, of Giuseppe Moretti, or of John Massey Rhind and their local works. They are all in the book, and it is far more fun looking for yourself — the sections are arranged geographically to make them easier to consult. The book, quite simply, is fat and wonderful, and whatever you pay for it will be worth it.

_James D. Van Trump_

_Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation_  
_Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania_


_]High Frontier_ offers a unique perspective on the development of technology and of an industry. Most histories of technology focus on a specific device or family of devices; most business or economic histories focus on particular entrepreneurs, firms, or industries. In contrast, Trimble examines, as his full title indicates, the development of a family of technologies within a specific geographic area.