

BOOKS...BOOKS...BOOKS...

Step Right Up! Classic American Target and Arcade Figurines by Richard and Valerie Tucker, Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 144 pages, hardcover, \$45.

Last summer Richard and Valerie Tucker invited those attending Frank Gaglio's MidWeek Antiques Show and the Pickers Market in Concord, N.H., to step right up to the table they were sitting at and have a look at a copy of *Step Right Up!*, their new book devoted to classic American target and arcade figurines. Unfortunately, there was a delay somewhere along the line and the books were not ready for sale at that time, so order users taken and now *Step Right Up!* is available. And it should spark the interest of folk art lovers, old and young, as it is a colorful splash of neatly shooting gallery targets, lead with a look at game game boards, arcade knockdown figures, side show banners and carnival paintings.

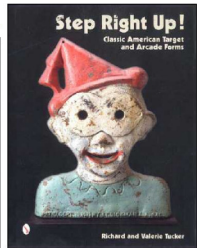
The Tuckers' collecting trail began in the late 1970s with contemporary art and sculpture, but with a move to the country in the 1980s their attention drifted over to painted furniture and objects that fall under the Americana umbrella. And that is when the world of arcades entered their lives, an interest that has consumed the best part of the past 30 years. As they mention in their forward, "the chase becomes all consuming" and it has been a very

successful and rewarding chase, nicely documented in *Step Right Up!*

The book has been divided into chapters that highlight the production of various manufacturers of arcade material, often with pages from some of the original catalogs shown. Among the makers singled out are Wm. F. Mangels Co., Carousel Works of Coney Island, N.Y.; C.W. Parker, The Carousel King of Abilene & Leavenworth, Kansas; The Chicago Manufacturing Co., Los Angeles; T. Dickman Co., Los Angeles; Muller and Smith, and John T. Dickman Co., Los Angeles.

While this information is useful and interesting, it is the many different objects and their surfaces, be it an even coat of rust or layers of colorful paints and a measure of dust that hold the attention of the reader. Collectors and antique showgoers often see cast iron shooting gallery targets for sale, usually a small angled, a deer, a duck and maybe an owl. But how often do you come across a lighthouse, a flaming red bear, a squirrel, a camel, an elephant, a howling toment or chick on its back? All of those plus many more, grace the pages of this book, a catalog in itself of the colorful arcade world.

Amarie Anton of American Primitive Gallery, New York City, writes the forward to the book and mentions that there has been a shortage of information about the arcade



Richard and Valerie Tucker

Howling Toment by John T. Dickman Co., Los Angeles

Richard and Valerie Tucker at their stand during the MidWeek Antiques Show in Concord, N.H. —Frank Gaglio photo



world, in particular shooting gallery targets. That void has been filled when he writes, "It took years of coaxing to get Valerie and Richard Tucker to finally fill this gap and publish an exhaustive study of American arcade targets."

That they have now done, and in grand style.

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