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Grace Lees-Maffei

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**WRITING
DESIGN
WORDS AND
OBJECTS**

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Grace Lees-Maffei : Writing Design: Words and Objects before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Writing Design: Words and Objects:

How do we learn about the objects that surround us? As well as gathering sensory information by viewing and using objects, we also learn about objects through the written and spoken word - from shop labels to friends' recommendations and from magazines to patents. But, even as design commentators have become increasingly preoccupied with issues of mediation, the intersection of design and language remains under-explored. Writing Design provides a unique examination of what is at stake when we convert the material properties of designed goods into verbal or textual description. Issues discussed include the role of text in informing design consumption, designing with

and through language, and the challenges and opportunities raised by design without language. Bringing together a wide range of scholars and practitioners, *Writing Design* reveals the difficulties, ethics and politics of writing about design.

“*Writing Design* [...] succeeds in drawing attention to complicated relationships between words and objects and fresh ways to approach design. Blank pages at the end of the book create space for the reader to make notes and, in a sense, also ‘write design’. Like a conference, the book becomes an interactive forum wherein the reader encounters ideas. Unable to attend the [Design History Society] conference myself, the book provided the pleasures of being there, demonstrating in itself the power of language to evoke both objects and experience.”
Marilyn Cohen, *The New School*, OUP Clippings
About the Author
Grace Lees-Maffei is Reader in Design History in the School of Creative Arts at the University of Hertfordshire and is co-editor of *The Design History Reader* (Berg, 2010).