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The Human Alphabet

AnnMarie Hamar

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Pilobolus. *The Human Alphabet*. Illustrated by John Kane. Roaring Brook Press, 2005. ISBN 1596430664. \$16.95. 32 pp.

Reviewer: AnnMarie Hamar

Reading Level: Primary

Rating: Excellent

Genre: Informational Books;

Subject: English language--Alphabet--Juvenile Literature; Books--Reviews;

This striking book presents a unique way of looking at the alphabet. The fifteen dancers of Pilobolus Dance Theater twist and bend themselves into shapes representing the letters of the alphabet. One letter is depicted in a small box on each page of the book. The dancers then illustrate an object whose name begins with that particular letter. It is obvious that there are some trick shots required to obtain the desired effect, but the photography is very colorful and clever. The only text appears on the first page, inviting the reader to guess what objects are represented by the dancers. The shapes are stunning and creative although several are actually quite difficult to interpret. Some children might be more interested in the shapes than what they are intended to represent. A key is included. This book would make a nice addition to a library looking for a more imaginative approach to the alphabet. Pilobolus was founded in 1971 by dancers at Dartmouth College and combines athletics, gymnastics, acrobatics and modern dance.