



# Book Review

This delightful book is intended for the architect/artist interested in the aesthetic properties of metals. A large book, it is appropriate for reception areas and lobbies of corporations involved in metal processing. A quote from the Foreword sets the tone for the entire book. "Metal is sculptural, allowing free-form structures inconceivable in any other material. It interacts with light and reflected water in a magical way. Changing constantly with the weather, light bounces and shimmers and glides across metal's iridescent surface in a way that is quite poetic. Some metals corrode in really interesting ways. Others maintain their jewel-like sheen over time."

Data presented throughout the book are always within the context of many superlative adjectives and much poetry. The word metal is a noun used in the singular.

The pictures, all in color, are superb and artistic. The book is for architects, engineers, metal fabricators, design professionals, and students who plan to use metals and metallic finishes. This is a large readership. The engineer who wants to use metals to make large objects that look pretty will find this book useful.

The distinction between large and small is important. Small pretty metallic objects have been made for years. They are called, in a collective sense, jewelry. This book is *not* about jewelry *per se* (although gold coatings are touched upon).

Title: ARCHITECTURAL METALS:  
A GUIDE TO SELECTION SPECIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE  
AUTHOR: L. William Zahner  
PUBLISHER: J. Wiley & Sons  
New York  
PRICE: Cloth \$89.95

The metals covered are:  
Aluminum (please read the Introduction)  
Copper  
Copper alloys: brass, bronze, nickel silver  
Iron, steel, stainless steel  
Lead and zinc  
Monel and titanium  
Metallic coatings on metals  
Paint coatings on metals

Many topics should be elementary to the graduate engineer. Converting sheet thickness values from inches to millimeters or to ounces per square inch are topics that some readers feel are not really necessary. On the other hand, such units are in common use in some metal processing operations, and their inclusion is helpful to some readers.

The introductory paragraphs of each section give excellent historical perspectives on the metal. The history of aluminum is particularly interesting, and every reader should study that section carefully.

The technical aspects/data are strictly handbook summaries and are starting points for further work. The extensive *Metals Handbook* series published by ASM International should be consulted for more detailed data.

The stated aim of the book is to "demystify metals." The aim has been achieved for the reader who is an artisan. To the metallurgist, a greater aim has been achieved. This book inspires the metallurgist to make pretty things from the metals, which are no mystery to him/her anyway.