



Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder: Pronged Ants, Horned Humans, Mice on Toast, and Other Marvels of Jurassic Technology

By Lawrence Weschler

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Editorial Review

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In the non-Aristotelian, non-Euclidean, non-Newtonian space between the walls of the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Los Angeles exist bats that can fly through lead barriers, spore-ingesting pronged ants, elaborate theories of memory, and a host of other off-kilter scientific oddities that challenge the traditional notions of truth and fiction. Lawrence Weschler's book, expanded from an article for *Harper's*, is, at turns, a tour of the museum, a profile of its founder and curator, David Wilson, and a meditation on the role of imagination and authority in *all* museums, in science and in life. *Mr. Wilson's Cabinet of Wonder* is an exquisite piece of "magic realist nonfiction" that will prove utterly captivating.

From Publishers Weekly

New Yorker staff writer Weschler probes into L.A.'s highly unusual Museum of Jurassic Technology in this NBCC finalist.

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From Library Journal

You have to search for the Museum of Jurassic Technology, a small storefront operation located on Los Angeles's less than noteworthy Venice Boulevard. Despite its awkward location, this quirky museum now has a cult following, and Weschler, a staff writer for the New Yorker, attempts to explain why. The driving force behind this nondescript institution is the accordion playing, filmmaking, computer wiz David Wilson, a man whose imagination rivals that of George Lucas. His bizarre exhibits feature spore-inhaling ants, peach-pit carvings, sculpture so small it fits into the eye of a needle, and a horn that once sprouted from the head of an English midwife. Weschler's research indicates several stretches of the truth in Wilson's exhibits, but most contain some modicum of authenticity. Weschler's journalistic style enhances this monograph's odd subject, and this slim volume will no doubt be enjoyed by the same fringe element that is making Wilson a cult hero in the museum world. Recommended where interest warrants.

Jonathan Jeffrey, Western Kentucky Univ., Bowling Green

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