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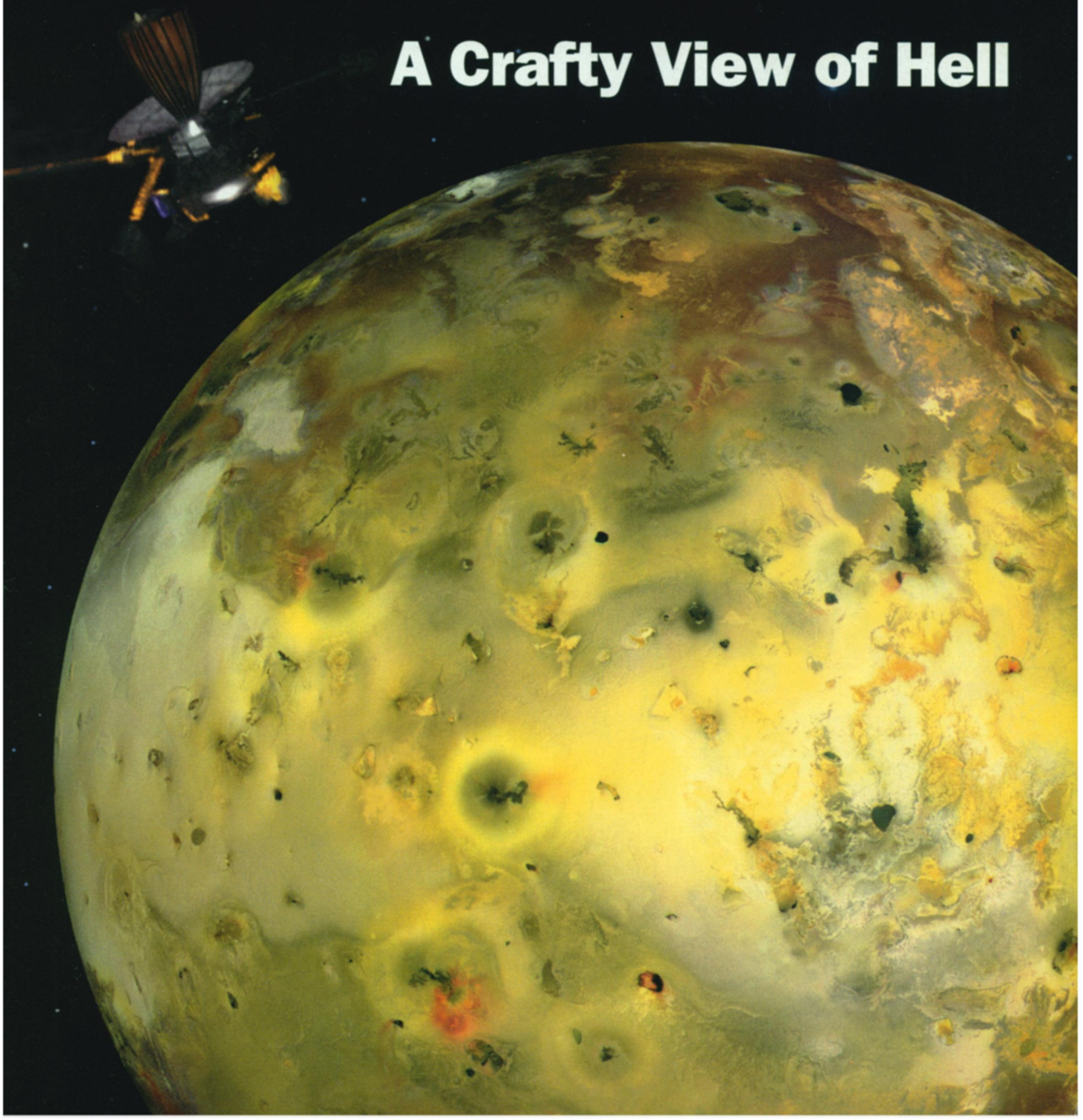
A Crafty View of Hell



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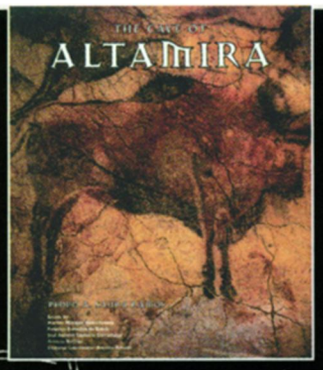

Harry N. Abrams Inc. 1999, 180 pages
10 ⅞" x 12 ½", hardcover, $49.50

Today, the cave of Altamira in northern Spain, with its famous ceiling decorated with magnificent painted figures of bison, horses, deer, and wild cattle, is acknowledged as one of the great monuments of prehistoric art.

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It seems surprising, that when the cave at Altamira was first discovered in 1879 it was greeted with skepticism ranging from mild caution to outright contempt. The reasons for this reaction were many. The discoverer of the cave was not an academic prehistorian. Moreover, everything about Altamira seemed excessive: its great antiquity, its vast size, and the astonishing quality of its paintings. Nothing even remotely like it had been seen before.

New discoveries during the 1890s and early 1900s brought to light a wealth of Paleolithic artifacts and paintings that looked strikingly like the art at Altamira. By 1905, the paintings in the cave were finally accepted as what they are: among the finest and most important surviving works of prehistoric art.

This beautiful book presents a fresh look at the cave of Altamira in light of the many exciting discoveries made in the field of Paleolithic archaeology in recent years. The thoughtful text examines theories about cave art and brings together all that we now know about the people who occupied the cave and created the art at Altamira. Since the cave has been closed to visitors for many years and future visits will be greatly restricted, these splendid photographs, taken expressly for publication in this book, will provide many readers their only chance to see the art of Altamira in detail—both in large views and at close range. —from Abrams

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Please send me_____copy(ies) of *The Cave of Altamira*. I include a check payable to Books Now for $49.50 plus $4.95 postage and handling for the first book (total $54.45). Add $2.50 for postage and handling for each additional book.

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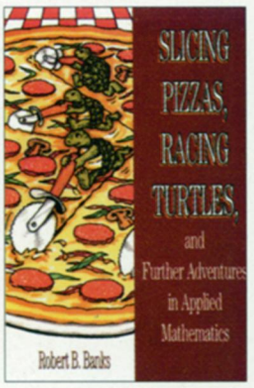
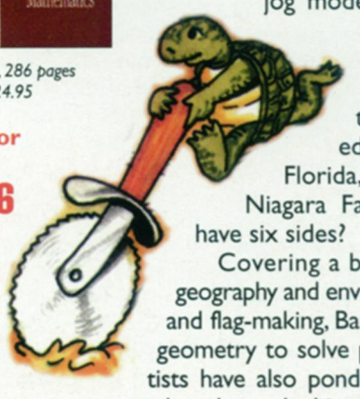
Have you ever daydreamed about digging a hole to the other side of the world? Robert Banks not only entertains such ideas, but better yet, he supplies the mathematical know-how to turn fantasies into problem-solving adventures. In this sequel to the popular *Towing Icebergs, Falling Dominoes*, Banks presents another collection of puzzles for readers interested in sharpening their thinking and mathematical skills. The problems range from the wondrous to the eminently practical. In one chapter, the author helps us determine the total number of people who have lived on earth; in another, he shows how an understanding of mathematical curves can help a thrifty lover, armed with construction paper and scissors, keep expenses down on Valentine's Day.



In 26 chapters, Banks chooses topics that are easy to analyze using relatively simple mathematics. The phenomena he describes are ones that we encounter in our daily lives or can visualize without much trouble. How do you get the most pizza slices with the least number of cuts? To go from point A to point B in a downpour of rain, should you walk slowly, jog moderately, or run as fast as possible to get least wet? What is the length of the seam on a baseball? If all the ice in the world melted, what would happen to Florida, the Mississippi River, and Niagara Falls? Why do snowflakes have six sides?



Covering a broad range of fields, from geography and environmental studies to map- and flag-making, Banks uses basic algebra and geometry to solve problems. If famous scientists have also pondered these questions, the author shares the historical details with the reader. —from Princeton University Press

Princeton University Press, 1999, 286 pages
6 ¼" x 9 ½", hardcover, $24.95

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