

Entrance into the TIP system is made by choosing a key word or words most likely to be contained in the title of an article in a specific subject. . . . In the revision of *Basic Data of Plasma Physics* the material is created in an open-ended form so that anyone with access to the computer program can search the literature for material that will appear after the report is printed. This feature of the bibliographic search by computers provides a new dimension to the published literature in book form which, without this open-ended feature, is out of date quite generally long before the actual publication date."

In general, the computer-selected data replaced the older data from the first edition if they are on the same subject, although information from the earlier edition was repeated if no new experimental data were found. Well over half the data given are new, indicating something about the rate of progress in the field.

I can only criticize one aspect of this book. That is, I would have preferred to have had included both the old and the new information, leaving it to the reader to judge which experiment should be given greater credence. True, this would have resulted in a book nearly half again as long, but it would have allowed the earlier data to remain easily available.

As it is, I intend to keep my earlier edition as handy as I expect to keep this one, which is to say, right next to my screwdriver. For an experimentalist working with any form of electrical discharge, it is quite as indispensable.

\* \* \*

*Herbert Malamud has spent most of his professional life working in the field of atomic physics and plasma research. He is now doing studies of electrical discharge effects on polymer surfaces.*

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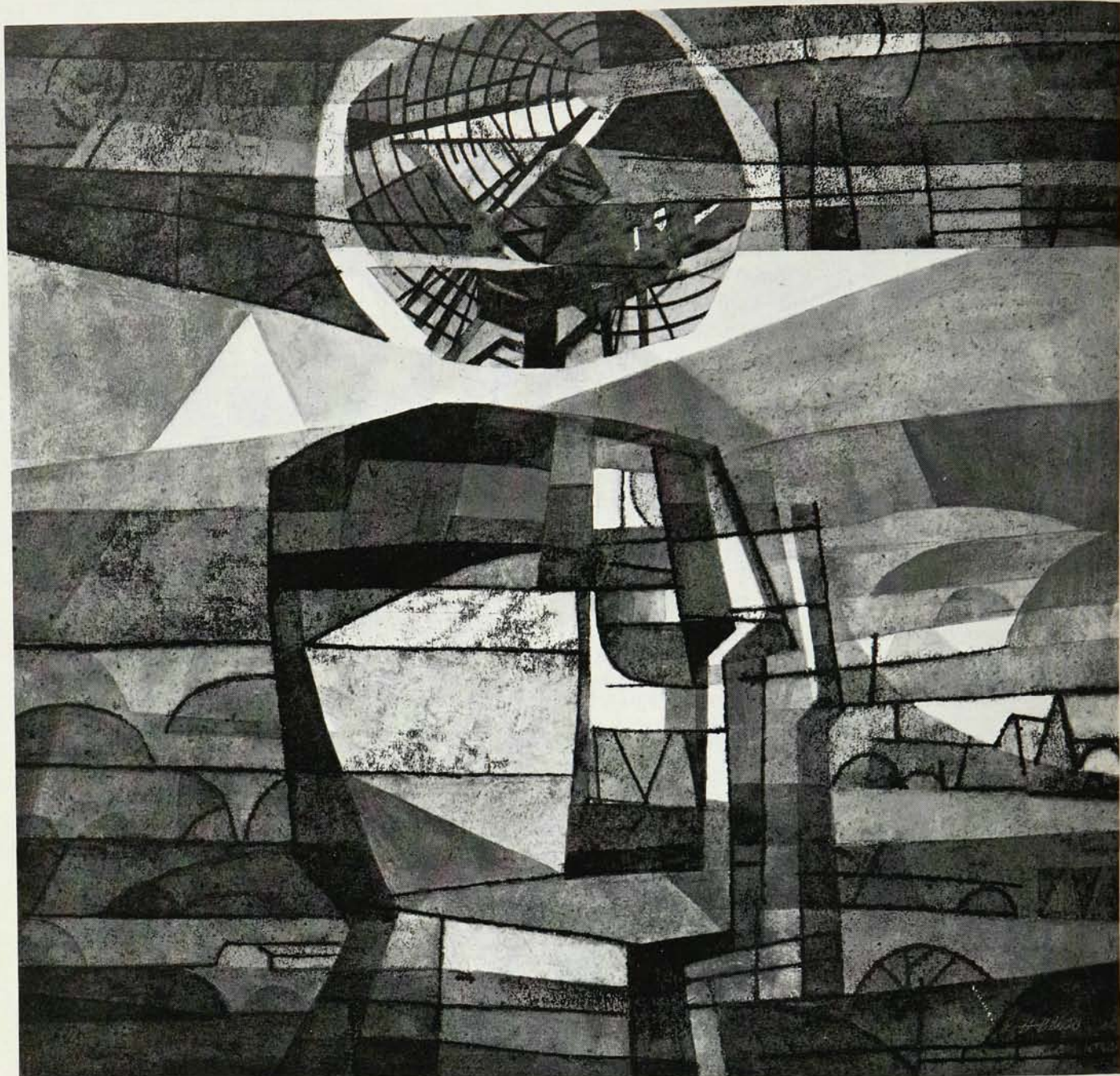
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