A HOUSE AT PINEHAVEN—Charles Fearhley
COLOUR IN THE HOME—Graham Dawson
ART AND THE CINEMA—Gordon Mirams
LIGHTING THE HOUSE—R. T. Parry
THREE DRAWINGS—T. A. McCormack
GRAMOPHONE NOTES—John Gray
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THE FLOORING SPECIALISTS
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I IMAGINE that by now most of those interested will have seen the exhibition of Town and Country Planning in Great Britain which for the past few months has been touring this country. Full marks to the British Council and the other bodies concerned for giving us the opportunity of studying this beautifully arranged record of town planning achievement in Britain since the war.

But for all its attractive and clear presentation it isn’t, I feel, the sort of exhibition one can whip around in five minutes after lunch and expect to gain the vaguest clue on what this town planning business is all about. And this, apparently, is just what the Mayor of Wellington did before he made his now famous remarks about leaving the City of Wellington to light industry and its fate, and concentrating on laying out newer and brighter suburbs on the outskirts. He was, of course, taken to task quite emphatically by the Institute of Architects, and certainly one couldn’t possibly give him more than two marks out of ten for his statements, but I can’t help feeling that if the exhibition has been rather simpler and more forceful its message might have penetrated at least a certain distance in the right quarters.

Do YOU EVER FEEL on the spur of the moment that you would like to say hullo to one of your friends in another town or in another country? And yet you do not feel inclined to sit down and write a letter. Why not drop him a postcard? It is cheap and easy. But as one half of a postcard is a picture, you can’t just send the first one you see on the little revolving stand inside the shop entrance. And why should your friend want a photograph of the main street or the town hall or the botanical gardens in full flower?

I know several people in Denmark and they like to remind me occasionally of their existence and no doubt expect me to return their greetings. I have just received two postcards, both full of gaiety, embodying all the spirit of a friendly greeting. If a panoramic view of Wellington with a cabbage tree in the foreground is the nearest thing I can find to convey my greetings in return, I would rather stay silent and keep on with the best intentions of writing a letter.

IF YOU WERE one of the thirty thousand who saw the Te Ao Replanned exhibition of the Architectural Centre, you will remember the main feature—the big model. The final resting place of this thirty square feet of timber, plaster of paris, balsa wood and poster paint is to be the Dominion Museum. Here it will be retained for permanent exhibition as a spur to the imagination and a record of the fancies of young hearts who for a short while really believed in the future.

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT that a quiet session with congenial companions over a few pots of beer in a public bar can be an extremely pleasant experience. But it can also be an extremely disagreeable one. If, as frequently happens in our city bars, the congenial companions are obliged to stand in closely-packed formation at a streaming bar, jostled and elbowed from all sides, with voices pitched high to overcome the sound of clashing glasses and clamouring neighbours, much of the pleasure is lost.

Centre students recently battled their way round the Wellington bars (as if they didn’t know them all well enough already), threw their suggestions for improvement on to paper, and invited several hotel proprietors to take part in a general discussion on the subject.

As one who must confess to rather more than a passing interest in pubs, I looked in on the discussion. As the debate ran its course several points emerged: one would conclude that the peculiar drinking habits of the New Zealander have been almost wholly determined by our barbarous licensing laws; and as these have apparently been confirmed by last year’s referendum, the realistic publican accepts the status quo and confines himself only with providing facilities for the consumption of the greatest possible quantity of beer in the shortest possible time.

Thus it would appear that the only hope for the introduction of more civilized drinking conditions lies in the placing before the public, through exhibitions and publicity, some more attractive alternatives so that a general demand may be created. Which, I understand, is what the Centre intends to do in a small way very shortly.

Sharawag
Totara wants careful priming

Successful finishes at last

Totara has a great many attributes. Perhaps its greatest lies in its inability to warp. This makes it particularly suitable for the construction of window frames, sashes, sills, doors, garden seats, and trellis. But, in all good things there are usually snags and Totara is no exception. The oily substance which is responsible for its virtue as a non-warping wood plays havoc when it comes to painting. The hot sun draws the oil from the wood, sometimes years afterwards, resulting in badly blistered and unsightly paintwork. Very often this occurs within a week or two of painting, with considerable loss of time and money. Even the very best ordinary primers are of little avail in combating this, for they do not ensure a positive dry. The secret of successfully painting Totara is in the initial preparation and then only if a specially prepared primer is used.

B.A.L.M. have studied this problem for years, and their laboratories have produced a primer that scientifically and successfully helps to overcome the problem, provided it is used in conjunction with their special finishes and the specifications given below are strictly adhered to. The results, if correctly carried out, will surprise not only the amateur painter but the professional too.

Architects, master painters and all concerned with paint will be interested to know that all B.A.L.M. products are right up to pre-war quality in formulae, and their lasting qualities are unrivalled. Any additional information regarding Totara or any other painting problem will be gladly supplied if enquiries are made to the Technical Service Dept., British Australian Lead Manufacturers (N.Z.) Ltd., Lower Hutt.

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**A. TOTARA**

Operation 1: Prime with B.A.L.M. Totara Primer 126.8752 and allow at least 24 hours to dry.

Operation 2: Brush one coat of DULUX 87 Line Trim Paint reduced 10% with Genuine or Mineral Turpentine. Allow 24 hours to dry.

Operation 3: Brush one coat DULUX 87 Line Trim Paint as received in the container.

**B. REPAINTING OVER OLD PAINT IN REASONABLE CONDITION**

Operation 1: Thoroughly clean down surface, sanding where necessary to remove ingrained dirt.

Operation 2: Brush one coat of DULUX 87 Line Trim Paint thinned 10% with Genuine or Mineral Turpentine.

Operation 3: Brush one coat DULUX 87 Line Trim Paint as received in container.

**NOTE:** The priming of Totara is an operation to be carefully watched. Whereas we are perfectly confident of the results when B.A.L.M. Totara Primer is used, we cannot be certain of the results of 87 Line if applied over imperfectly dry primer; therefore we strongly advise that wherever possible B.A.L.M. Undercoats be used with DULUX 87 Line Trim Paint.

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**DULUX HI-GLOSS HOUSE PAINT — 87 LINE**

**A. FINISHING OF TOTARA**

Operation 1: Prime with B.A.L.M. Totara Primer, Reference Number 126.8752, and allow to dry at least 24 hours before re-coating.

Operation 2: Brush one coat DULUX Undercoat for DULUX Hi-Gloss House Paint. Allow to dry 24 hours before re-coating.

Operation 3: Brush one coat DULUX House Paint, 87 Line, as received in the container.

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35
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IDEA!

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ONE WALL DIFFERENT! You don't have to have all walls the same colour—try painting two sides a deeper colour, or paint the wall opposite the window say a deep red or brilliant yellow—it's effective. Or use a "shell of colour"—pick up floor covering colour and repeat in walls and ceiling—your furniture will get a lift.

Berger
GREATEST NAME IN PAINTS SINCE 1760
In previous articles I have stressed practical considerations such as comfort, convenience, ease of cleaning and maintenance and also the practical and aesthetic values of simplicity. All that I have said applies equally to colours.

As in many things the selection of colours for decoration and furniture is usually a matter of compromise but I do not want to create the impression that the compromise is a middle tone of neutral tint. I mention compromise merely because there are so many conflicting points to be considered, and to prepare you for a thoughtful process of arriving at the most precise balance between them, never forgetting that if you play too safe the result will almost certainly be dull. It is better to make a positive mistake than to achieve negative dullness.

**Colour determines mood**

Colour is probably the most important single factor in furnishing. It determines character and mood—whether grave or gay, restful or lively.

Everything in a room, walls and ceiling, floor with carpet or rugs, curtains, the furniture, light fittings, pictures and so on—all contribute to the complete colour scheme. The colours of walls and floor should serve to unify the scheme, and being the largest areas of colour tend to control the character of the room. These colours should be chosen with the realization that they will be the back drop against which most things in the room will be seen. The most accommodating colours as backgrounds, those with which almost every colour will go are unfortunately nondescript greys, buffs, and creams. The excessive use of these is one of the chief faults of decoration today. Much more interesting results can be obtained by taking a bolder line and choosing clearer colours especially for the walls.

As the area of the walls is considerable, strong colours are not necessary but a pale clear yellow, green, pink or blue can be very successful. The colours selected for these larger areas, walls, ceilings and floor, should be reasonably light because lightness is essential to a cheery atmosphere as well as being necessary to seeing well. On the other hand don’t have the colours, especially that of your floor, so light that every speck of dirt shows.

In selecting background colours there are many things to be considered. If your room is sunny, to use yellow or a warm buff or pink could create too hot and dazzling an effect. In this case a pale green or blue might be more suitable. The converse is even more true, that a room which does not get the sun needs cheering up with a warm yellow or pink. A room that is used only occasionally such as a spare bedroom or perhaps a dining room, can be well decorated with a more lively and exciting colour scheme than one might use for a living room or a bedroom in continuous use.

**Harmony and contrast**

Generally speaking the smaller an area of colour, the stronger it can be without disturbing the scheme. Curtains may be of stronger colour and more lively pattern than the walls. Upholstery, provided there is not too much of it, can be stronger again. In this connection there is the nice story of the Empress Josephine who made a rival in a blue dress sit beside her on a green sofa throughout an evening party. She herself wore white and looked delicious. Try to avoid large quantities of any colour likely to clash with the dresses of your friends when they come to see you. This is a point on which you will have to make a judicious compromise because, as I said before, if you play too safe the result will probably be dull.

Harmony and contrast both have their place in every successful colour scheme and these are things not easily put into words. The principal colours used in a scheme of decoration must definitely be in harmony with one another but if the scheme is to have life there must in addition be some contrast. I know that I am now about to tread on thin ice and may be misunderstood, especially as words may not mean quite the same to everybody. However, here is some idea of the colours that harmonize and of those that are not likely to do so.

**Few colours are pure**

It is seldom that pure colours are used. For instance, most blues contain either a greater or lesser amount of yellow on the one hand or red on the other. Similarly most yellows incline towards the orange or towards the green. In addition fewer colours are fully saturated, and are either somewhat diluted with white, making them paler, or on the other hand diluted with grey, making them darker, but in either case less brilliant than the saturated colour would be.

There are few, if any, absolute rules of colour harmony, but there are a few ideas that help. If you are using, for example, a main colour based on yellow that is slightly green, it is usually best to avoid any large quantity of a yellow which verges towards the orange. Similarly, a blue containing red, i.e., purplish blue, will probably not go with a greenish blue, and so on for the other colours.

Colours are said to be complementary to one another when they would produce a neutral grey if mixed together. For instance yellow is complementary to violet—blue to orange—red to green, and so on. Colours that are complementary will usually harmonize but care must be taken to ensure that they really are complementary especially if it is desired to use them in strong concentrations.

More subtle and complicated harmonies can be developed with three or four colours which when mixed would produce a neutral grey or black.

Contrast, too, may be of several different kinds. The simplest is probably that of light against dark and this may apply whether the colours are the same or different. Then there is the contrast that occurs when two different colours...
are used even though they may be in harmony. The strongest contrast of this sort is obtained when complementary colours are used in pure saturated form. Contrasts of colours not in harmony, are only for the use of those among us with real talent.

Contrast, although it must be present, should be used with great discretion or a harsh, restless effect will be produced. Strong contrasting colours should be used only in small amounts. For instance, if you have a green carpet, the selection of a red upholstery material would probably be a mistake, but a red cushion or two might be used about the room to good effect. Or a bowl of red roses on a low table might be beautifully set off against such a carpet. It could well happen though, that if you had the red cushions and the red roses too, that the roses would lose their value due to the distraction provided by the cushions.

Cheerful, individual and practical
Never forget in designing the colour scheme that your house and the rooms in it are to be lived in and consequently you should aim to make people happy and comfortable. Light, clear colours are cheerful, neutralized colours and especially blues and greys are restful, while strong heavy colours, especially browns, purples and black, are depressing. If you aim at too spectacular a colour scheme, you may find that a relatively small change such as a friend coming in with a blue dress, or drawing the curtains in the evening and thus increasing the amount of them seen, will upset your carefully worked out balance. Aim to be cheerful and individual, but never forget to be practical about it all.

Texture
The effect of texture is closely allied to that of colour, while colour is a purely visual quality, texture has to do also with the sense of touch. In fact, even when a surface is only seen and not touched, the visual impression is partly translated into a knowledge of how it would feel to touch that surface. As with colour, both harmony of texture and contrast have their place. The largest surfaces in your decorative scheme should have textures in reasonable harmony. For instance, if your curtains are of a coarse type of weave it is unlikely that a silk brocade would be a happy choice for an upholstery material, but a homespun tweed probably would. Again, the high finish associated with French polished mahogany furniture should not be associated too closely with the rougher textures of oak, for instance. However, in texture too, contrast has its place when used with discretion. A satin-covered cushion or two, as relatively small accents, can be used successfully on pieces upholstered in a much coarser textured material.

It is not a bad general rule to avoid trying to match the colours of materials of differing texture. Oblique light casts a multitude of tiny shadows in a rough material and darkens it. This is enough to destroy the match without making enough difference to be interesting. Glossy paint and flat paint or distemper, for instance, are better kept a few shades apart or of quite different colours where they occur in the same scheme. In the same way it is better not to try for an exact match between carpet and furnishing fabrics.

Lighting
A word about artificial lighting. The lighting arrangements for a room are a utilitarian matter. During the day they are of no use and when evening comes they should give light without calling attention to themselves. I think that both doctors and illumination engineers will agree that one should not look at the source of light and therefore light fittings should be as unobtrusive as possible. They should certainly not be highly decorated eye-catchers, nor should the bulb or tube be visible from normal viewpoints. It is good for both decorative and visual reasons if at least some of the things illuminated are brighter to the eye than any part of the fitting normally seen.

For good decorative effect some noticeable difference in intensity of light is needed. An even overall brilliance is better than overall dullness, but a much more interesting effect is produced when pools of light produced by individual fittings at the places where they are most useful are added to a moderate general illumination.

"I'm dreaming of a white Christmas" is the idea behind the designs of most of the Christmas cards we exchange with one another. The understandable homesickness which the early settlers felt has perpetuated itself in the pictures of snow, holly, robins, and weather-bound coaches. But we, a hundred years later, have had time to accommodate ourselves to the New Zealand seasons. So it is pleasing to welcome the appearance of some eight Christmas card designs by Mervyn Taylor which have an appropriate feeling of New Zealand place and season. They will be appreciated by friends abroad as an expression of our country and liked by friends at home for being pleasantly different. The new cards are published by the Mermaid Press and will be in the shops by the time Design Review is published.

M. B. Patience
ART AND THE CINEMA

Gordon Mirams

When I was asked to write another article on art films in general and the Storch-Haesaerts production Rubens in particular, to tie up with the screening of this film at the Centennial Festival of Documentary in Christchurch this October, my first reaction was to refuse; on the ground that the subject had already been well covered and that I had personal experience of nothing new which could profitably be discussed. I was overlooking the fact that, because of New Zealand's isolation, this development of the art film—one of the most vigorous creative movements in the cinema today—is really quite new to us here: I was, too, conscious of some articles I had myself written on this theme while overseas with Unesco, and the work that was done there in 1948-49 towards organizing an International Conference on Art Films in Paris and forming an International Federation of Art Films as a permanent body charged with fostering this branch of the cinema. By the time that Conference met, Unesco's Film Section had already compiled, in draft form, a world list of films on architecture, painting, design, tapestry, sculpture, etc., and much of this preliminary documentation has since been incorporated into an excellent and authoritative brochure entitled Films on Art, which made its appearance at the end of last year under Unesco's sponsorship and which contains a catalogue of 150 art films from thirteen countries. My feeling that the topic was now well past the introductory stage was further reinforced by my knowledge that much space has already been devoted to art films in such publications as Hollywood Quarterly and Sight and Sound; that three issues of the Unesco Courier in the first months of 1950 alone have contained discussions of the subject; and, especially, that the Second International Congress of Art Films was held in Brussels last February, when delegates saw and judged more than forty new films produced in fifteen countries since 1948.

These details seem worth mentioning, for the dual purpose of emphasizing the importance of this new aspect of the cinema, and the fact that—in spite of all that has been happening—it still remains for New Zealand to 'discover' the art film. And for that introductory purpose, among the many varieties of this type of film now in existence, no better example could have been found than Rubens. It is now two years since I saw three screenings of this film in Paris—the first was a preview at which the producer himself was seeing his film for the first time in completed form—and therefore it may well be that in the meantime some new films have appeared which are more remarkable. It would be surprising indeed if such were not the case: after all, the mere figure of forty new films of the genre produced in two years and worthy of submission to an international congress indicates what a creative ferment is at present going on in this quarter of the screen. There has certainly been in overseas publications some criticism of Rubens which suggests that it is not quite the masterpiece, or the last word on the subject, which it seemed to many of us when it first appeared. Even at that time, indeed, my own enthusiasm was tempered by awareness of a few obvious faults: chiefly, perhaps, its rather excessive length (six reels then, though there is some reason to believe that the length has since been reduced), and the fact that, to quote something I wrote at the time, 'the producers have been so enthusiastic about some of their innovations in technique that devices which are striking in the extreme when first encountered lose much of their impact through repetition and towards the end become little more than dull thuds on one's consciousness.'

However, as Paul Duvay has pointed out, Rubens introduces a new and important didactic technique: it represents the triumphant entry of the history of art into the domain of the cinema. The producers bring a critical attitude to the screen and do not pretend to be objective. They present us with one view of Rubens and, in an attempt to place the man in the evolution of art, seek to measure his stature by a series of comparisons. Having given the audience a general picture of the painter himself, the film explores his paintings. With its use of the split screen to point the contrast or the similarity between the work of Rubens and his successors as well as his predecessors, with its use of spotlighting and, especially, of white outlines drawn around sections of a painting to focus attention on detail and composition or to suggest analogies and even actual movement within the frame of the picture, and above all with its fine photographic quality and its musical background to draw out the very essence of the work and illuminate the intention of the artist—with all this, Rubens is certain to make quite as strong an impression on audiences at the Christchurch Festival as it did two years ago on those in Paris and at the 1948 Film Festival in Venice.

* * *

It is, of course, a pity in some ways that those New Zealanders who will be lucky enough to see Rubens when it comes here will be lacking the background of prior experience and knowledge of other art films desirable for a proper appreciation of this outstanding example. Apart from one or two French films on Matisse, Rodin, and Maillol, there has been nothing available in this country to provide a context for its presentation: audiences therefore will have to receive its impact virtually in a vacuum. With this in mind, one needs to mention that these are art films we are discussing: most of them so far have been made in Europe, and in Europe the ordinary person of any age as well as the artist takes the human form very much more for granted than is the case here. There is none of the prudery about the nude which can still be found
in this corner of the world; and if the film were intended for general exhibition I don’t know just how some of the solid burghers of Christchurch and their wives and families (or for that matter those of any New Zealand city) would accept the camera’s frank and detailed scrutiny of the ripe nudes in which the artist Rubens delighted. But that is another headache for the Censor, poor fellow, and doubtless he can find a way to overcome it. At least it is not such a difficult problem in the present case as it might be, for example, if he had to consider passing for general New Zealand exhibition another notable example of the art film which I have seen—Le Monde de Paul Delvaux, where the camera, aided by an imaginative script and sound-track, explores the curious private world of the painter Delvaux, peopled by men and women who have shed their clothes in settings which are a weird composite of modernity and timelessness, reality and dream-fantasy.

The two films mentioned, Rubens and Le Monde de Paul Delvaux, are both from Belgium, a small country which, in the development of the art film, has throughout made a contribution out of all proportion to its size. Perhaps this is due precisely to that very fact of Belgium’s smallness which...
by limiting native film production almost exclusively to documentaries, turned the attention of Belgian producers to their country's artistic heritage— to its paintings, sculptures, architecture, and illuminations—as a source of material. But whatever the cause, the result has been that some of the most important pioneering and experimental efforts in the realm of the art film, as well as some of its most striking achievements up to the present, have emerged from Belgium.

In this sphere, indeed, Belgium shares pride of place with Italy (even in advance of France), although Italy has produced probably a greater quantity of such films and appears, on the evidence, to have been rather earlier in the field. Production of films on art subjects in Italy dates back to the 1920's, but most early examples of such films—indeed, most of them up to 1940—were intended to serve solely 'educational' purposes in the narrow sense: they presented pictures of paintings, statues, monuments, and buildings, but were conceived by teachers rather than by artists and, considered as films, had little aesthetic appeal in their own right. About 1940, however, began the new approach to the art film: to treat the painting or the sculpture or even the historic piece of architecture not as an indivisible whole but as an object whose qualities and design and aesthetic conception could be revealed brilliantly by the film itself through skilful cutting and cross-cutting, selection and juxtaposition of details, music and commentary. The result in one or two cases has been something which, dealing with an established work of art in another form, comes close to qualifying as a new work of art in itself.

In Italy, Luciano Emmer and Enrico Gras are the counterparts of Storck and Haesaerts in Belgium (and perhaps one should at this point include reference to Gaston Diehl of France, whose excellent Van Gogh, which I saw in unfinished form in Paris about two years ago, is also, I understand, to be included at the Christchurch Festival). Emmer, who has specialized in applying the analytical technique to some of the classic Italian frescos, should be known even in New Zealand by repute; let us hope he may some day be known by his works. There have been those who have criticised the technique itself, on the ground that a painting should be looked at whole and not in parts—but can this argument hold good for some of the great Italian frescos, which are painted in sequence almost like a modern comic-strip, or of those many murals and paintings which are too large and too detailed for the human eye to comprehend in one piece? It is surely then legitimate to use the eye of the camera as Emmer and his colleagues in several countries are doing, since the details already exist in the paintings, and this photographic treatment ensures that they are not overlooked. But of course it does something else, too—something which is well expressed in the words of Francesco Monotti: 'A spell is upon us. It is impossible to shake it off again. Art, as Art—as the fixed image of a dead and unchangeable world—is gone for ever. Invention and expression, light and colour, burn and flicker again before us as they did of yore in the great creative periods of humanity.'

* * *

When I touched earlier on the topic of censorship, I did so solely to indicate that problems other than those of distance and economics might be encountered for a start in any effort to transplant some of these exotic films to the rather rigorous cultural climate of New Zealand. At the same time, just because of our isolation from the art centres of the world, and the consequent inability of most of our people to see the world's architectural, sculptural and painted treasures in the original and on the spot, these art films have a special value to us. It is probably very true that the main reason why more people do not appreciate good art and good design is not because they are, in general, insensitive to beauty, but because they do not get enough chance to see it and understand it. But now, just as the radio has done much to bring music to the people, so the cinema is beginning to do the same for the pictorial and plastic arts. That is why the present development of the art film overseas is so worthwhile, why the securing of such a film as Rubens for the Christchurch Festival is so much to be welcomed.

APOLOGY
We regret very much having made an error in the July-August issue of Design Review. On page 15 T. F. Hough should read T. F. Haughey.

THE EDITORS
A HOUSE AT PINEHAVEN

Architect: Charles Tournley

The site, covered mostly with pine trees, with some native bush and a stream across the front, was bought with an excavation partly done. The owners extended this until they had a flat space almost large enough for the house and high enough to make the most of the view. The requirements were a simple, straightforward house, with the plan requirements as mentioned below. Both owners are keen trampers and enjoy sleeping out of doors, so required a verandah with French casements opening out from at least one, and preferably two bedrooms. Both botanists, they required a desk lighted suitably for using a microscope, mounting specimens etc., with space nearby for bookshelves. Storage for mounted specimens is in standardized boxes, which are held in frames under the window seat, at the dining end of the living room. The bookcase-desk fitting was used to form a division between living area and hall, screening the room from the front door, while not destroying the feeling of space. Further storage is provided by built-in cupboards beside the fireplace. Kitchen and living space were planned in one unit to give more sunlight in the working portion of the house. The space under the tank stand and also under the south-west corner of the house is used for bicycles, garden tools, firewood etc., although the firewood neatly stacked by the owner under the cantilevered portion of the verandah has quite a decorative effect. The construction is orthodox, with concrete foundation and wood frame weatherboarded, the weatherboards being rough sawn and the concrete unplastered. Interior linings are fibrous plaster painted, with electric lights recessed into ceiling. Windows are either top hung or else horizontally sliding, the large window to the living room being 16 feet long divided into four sashes, with the centre pair sliding to give an opening of 8 feet. The roof is of timber construction with trusses consisting of light members nailed together supporting purlins to take a corrugated aluminium roofing at 10 degrees pitch, the low ridge line being very useful in allowing sun to shine into the backyard. The eaves line follows the line of the verandah, giving an overhang of about 3 feet at the living room end, and preventing overheating in the summer.
The Head, above, reproduces least well: there is a delicacy about the line and the faint blue wash of the original, a quality of 'floatingness' which is inevitably lost through mechanical process on coated paper; but the experiment is so unusual with McCormack that the further experiment of reproduction is justified.

Sea and Rocks, on the opposite page, comes out better, and there we have a sort of rapid monochrome distillation of all McCormack's studies in the open of objects which he has so often invested with his own particular poetry of light and colour. But here he has got down rather to essential movement and I imagine that in this sketch, after preliminary thought, his brush moved somewhat with the speed of his breaking wave.
THREE DRAWINGS BY T. A. McCORMACK

Mr. McCormack is so able a painter that any experiment he makes is worth paying attention to; for even if his casual bits and pieces are not final works of art they can give considerable insight into his methods of handling his material and (as it were) his processes of thought. The three ink drawings reproduced (facsimile size) in this issue are examples of a large number which he did some eight or nine years ago, and they are essentially McCormack. Two are on fragments of newsprint—the classical head and the vase of flowers; the third, Sea and Rocks, is on a sheet torn out of an ordinary writing pad. The reproductions therefore lose some of the quality of texture given by the impact of the ink on the paper, but they carry a good idea of McCormack's economy of method and his instinct for the effective placing of line and wash.
With *The Flowerpiece* we have stillness, though stillness with, in the original, almost sparkle. It is in the tradition of those still lifes, never reduced to a formula, in which McCormack has produced an astonishing and subtle network of colour; and if you look at this for a while you get almost the illusion of colour, so skilful is the balance, the interaction, of black and white. The drawing might be a preliminary study for something larger, but I do not think it is. It stands on its own, self-sufficiently and very firmly. Full as it is of brushwork, I do not think anything has been wasted; the blobs, squiggles and crosses sink into a quite coherent and satisfying pattern. No one could wish to exclude this little picture from the canon of McCormack's work.—J.C.B.
GRAMOPHONE NOTES

John Gray


Rachmaninoff wrote this work about 1934 and gave the first performance of it himself. The theme is the well-known one of the 24th Caprice, upon which Brahms wrote his monumental set of variations for piano solo. If the Russian composer’s work, which is also basically a set of variations, cannot quite be called ‘monumental’ it is none the less a brilliant, unfailingly attractive piece. The variations traverse every mood, and a touch of devilment lies in the occasional introduction of the old ‘Dies Irae’ theme—quite appropriate, one feels, where Paganini is concerned. There are touches of vulgarity, perhaps, but a healthy vulgarity at times is no great defect in music, and how many works for piano and orchestra written during the last twenty years have lasted as well as this one? There are at least three other recordings, but the only one previously issued here was the composer’s own version with Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra, dating from the time of the premiere. That set will always be precious for the sake of Rachmaninoff’s piano playing, but it was harsh recording by modern standards. Rubenstein gives a dazzling account of the score and Susskind has the Philharmonia Orchestra right on their toes. The recording is spacious and well balanced, though sounding rather laid in the more numerous passages.


This piece is of exceptional interest, as it is Rossini’s very first operatic overture—that to a one act comedy performed in Venice in 1810. The astonishing thing is how assured and mature it sounds—the composer clearly had his style well formed even in those early days. Opening amusingly enough with three chords similar to those in the Magic Flute overture of Mozart’s, it is soon running along in the gayest fashion with some delightful writing for the woodwind and solo horn. All in all, a welcome alternative to The Barber of Seville or Tancrede. The performance under an experienced Italian conductor is quite first class. The recording very good. The orchestra is the official symphonic organization of Rome, attached to the famous St. Cecilia Academy—sometimes it is called the Angueiro orchestra, after a now demolished building in which its concerts used to be given.


Here we have an intelligent replacement of a valued old recording. The original set, also under the composer’s baton, was made in 1930 shortly after the first performance, and it is good to know that this up-to-date version has been put out—at a cheaper price. The Rio Grande is a sort of free fantasy built round a fantastic poem of Sacher-Masoch in which sound dominates sense, and which gives a vague and tantalizing picture of right life in a Spanish-American seaport. Besides a brilliant piano part, the score contains elaborate writing for almost every kind of percussion instrument—here recorded with a clarity undreamed of twenty years ago. All concerned join in a vigorous performance, and Gladys Ripley sings movingly in the long contralto solo which brings the work to a quiet and magical conclusion.


This somewhat absurd practice adopted by this company of labelling operatic excerpts by the first words uttered by the singer, regardless of what they may mean, has resulted in the titling of the Adriana Lecouvreur side as Troppò Signori, or Too much gentlemen! The main part of the side is given over to an expressive aria, Io son l’amicizia amica or I am the humble handmaiden, which is one of the highlights of this particular opera. However, as it is not at all familiar to most of us, a few words of explanation might be welcome. The opera was produced in 1902, and so far as is known, its composer is still alive (he was born in 1865). The libretto is laid in early 18th century Paris, and the story concerns a famous actress, Adriana Lecouvreur, whose love affair with a Saxon prince is thwarted by a scheming and jealous princess. The opera commences with a scene backstage at the Comedie Francaise where Adriana is about to play in a Greek tragedy. Her great art calls forth expressions of admiration from her colleagues and the stage manager—she silences them, exclaiming, ‘too much, gentlemen’—and forthwith sings the ravishingly lovely aria in which she declares herself to be but the ‘humble handmaiden’ of the dramatic art. It is to be hoped that this aria (never previously available here on a record) may become as well loved as the best known by Puccini.

On the reverse we have the great soliloquy from the last act of La Gioconda in which the unhappy heroine decides that suicide will bring the only solution to her many woes. It would take more space than we can spare to explain why Gioconda is in such distress—it is enough to say that she has been visited with practically every misfortune that can fall to a soprano in Italian opera. Joan Hammond, with each succeeding record, seems to grow in stature as a singer in the Italian style. She has fire and brilliance, warmth and tenderness, too. Try any of her more recent records, in which she has been singing Italian arias in Italian. Such a command of the right style is quite rare in a British singer, and as one who has heard most of the great Italian sopranos singing in their own opera houses, I cannot emphasize too strongly the pleasure to be got from Miss Hammond’s singing of Italian opera.

Britten: Variations on a Theme by Frank Bridge. Boyd Neel Orchestra cond. by Boyd Neel. Decca AR 23079.

This is the Boyd Neel’s second recording of a piece written specially for it. The orchestra surpasses itself—it seems more sensitive, more delicately resilient than it was when it played here—and the recording is first-rate. The music itself has charm, wit, pathos and near-tragedy. Britten’s work has the same feeling of hectic adolescent excitement that one finds in the novels of Denton Welch; it, too, is the art of an infinitely knowing, yet innocent boy.

The orchestra communicates this febrile feeling precisely and exquisitely. The set is not yet released here. If you don’t order it from England, at least put it at the top of your dealer’s list.
Let us start with two simple and self-evident propositions: the first is that the eye is a sensitive and delicate organ; the second is that electricity provides the most convenient and flexible artificial light the world has yet seen. That being so, one is tempted to ask why the usual way to light our rooms is to hang a globe from the centre of the ceiling and cover it up with a shade. Because, one supposes, that is how it has always been done: the chandelier, the oil lamp, gaslight, and now electricity.

Good light is light where we need it and strong enough for us to be able to see in comfort. When you consider that 100 foot-candles is very high for artificial lighting in a normal room, and that natural daylight gives 200 foot-candles in a sunny room, you will realize that most houses are quite inadequately lit.

What I want to emphasize in the remarks that follow is that the placing of the source of light is all-important, and that, with electricity, we can organize our lighting as we want to.

(a) Good vision in an interior depends not only on the standard of lighting itself, but also on the type of decorative scheme employed. Generally speaking, when light is thrown upwards from a fitting, the effect is minimized by dark surroundings and such dark surroundings will have greater effect in small rooms than in large rooms.

(b) Fittings should be designed from a functional point of view, but this does not mean they cannot at the same time be aesthetically pleasing; in fact, severity of design often meets both these requirements. Ornamental ridges and bars and other similar dust-trapping features should be avoided. Dusty and dirty fittings can consume as much as from 25% to 50% of light output and therefore they should be kept clean.

(c) Renewal of any fitting should not involve damage to or renewal of any part of the structural fabric and hence co-operation between the architect and the services engineer at the inception of design is very necessary.

(d) Fittings, with the contained lamp considered as a part, should be designed so that brightness should preferably not exceed a level of 2 candles per sq. in. and on no account 10 candles per sq. in. at any angle of vision between the horizontal and 30 degrees below the horizontal in rooms, and in any direction within the field of vision of a person descending a staircase. In the latter case, a source of light should be outside the field of vision, if possible.

(e) Fittings should be kept as high as possible above eye level, consistent with economy of lamp size and hence consumption, and with the efficient use of the reflective qualities of a light ceiling.

(f) The weight of suspended fittings should be kept to the minimum and such weight should be carried by a pipe or a chain and not by the flexible cord supplying the fitting.

(g) Flexible cords to standard lamps and the like should be kept as short as possible and preferably should be avoided altogether. Where their use is essential, care should be taken that heat from the lamp does not cause deterioration of the insulation.

(h) Table and standard and bedside
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lamps should be of stable design (i.e., not easily overturned—a heavy base usually takes care of this requirement) and should give adequate electrical and mechanical protection to the user. When a switch is necessary for the control of the appliance, this should be incorporated as an integral part of its design and not fitted extraneously in the flexible supply cord.

(i) Ideal illumination demands the absence of contrast and the elimination of alternate patches of lightness and shadow; therefore an even distribution of light should be a first consideration. Small areas of brightness only emphasize isolated pools of shadow and except for local intensities such as are called for by a reading lamp, a room should give a general impression of even, cheerful light.

(j) Fluorescent tubes, at least in their present stage of development, are not generally desirable in domestic lighting application, largely on account of their lack of a "cosy" appearance and for reasons referred to below; also because the area to be illuminated is usually too small and ceilings are too low, for the proper utilisation of their high light-output. In the incandescent tungsten field, "pearl" lamps are preferable to the "clear" type to avoid glare.

Some suitable sizes of lamps for domestic purposes of various types are suggested below.

(a) Kitchens and Sculleries
Usually two points should be provided, these being conveniently disposed to avoid shadows at working places, and supplying not less than 100 watts of tungsten lighting for a room 10ft by 8ft.

(b) Living Rooms
Two fixed points for general lighting suitably disposed and aggregating 100 watts for a room 10ft by 10ft plus local lighting for reading, sewing, etc.

(c) Bathrooms
One 60 watt fitting conveniently disposed in relation to toilet basin, shaving mirror, etc. The fitting should be so located that condensation of moisture affecting live parts is avoided and the switch should be outside the room.

(d) Bedroom
One or two fixed brackets or socket outlets for reading lamps; one fitting for general lighting suitably disposed in respect to furniture. The latter to be 60 watts in a room 10ft by 10ft; 75 watts in a room 10ft by 12ft; and in rooms above this, 100 watts, where these rooms are not abnormally large.

(e) W.C.
One 40 watt lamp in an enclosed non-metallic fitting, with a switch outside the door, or where practicable a door-operated switch.

(f) Stairs
Not less than a 40 watt lamp in a fitting giving direct distribution every 20ft.

(g) Cupboards and Larders
If these are not deep, they can be illuminated from the general room lighting; in this case, care should be taken that the doors, when open, do not obscure the light source. Where the cupboards are deep or of the walk-in type, a lamp 15 watts or so, can be fitted inside. The switch can be fitted outside, or a door-operated switch can be fitted, closing the circuit when the door is open.

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(a) High capital costs.
(b) High maintenance charges.
(c) Low running costs (i.e., less electricity consumption). Hence, where use has to be made of artificial lighting for considerable continuous periods, fluorescent lighting is favoured, as then full advantage can be taken of (c) above.
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(d) Low surface brightness, greatly reducing direct and reflected glare.
(e) High efficiency, approximately 45 lumens per watt as against the 13 lumens per watt of the modern 100-watt tungsten lamp.
(f) The large area of the source of light tends to give a general evenness of illumination.
(g) Colour rendering can be arranged to approach natural daylight.
Another advantage often claimed for fluorescent tubes, that of long life, is sometimes more apparent than real. There is a noticeable falling-off of efficiency the longer a lamp is used and this is immediately obvious if a new tube is fitted alongside one which has had a long period of usage.
Auxiliary starting gear is necessary and constitutes an additional complication. Frequent switching has an adverse effect.
It will be seen that factors (a) and (b) prevent its general adoption for domestic use, except in situations such as sitting or living-rooms where long periods of continuous use would justify the high capital cost.

CONCLUSION
All electrical installations should be designed by qualified registered engineers and carried out under their supervision by wiremen with recognized training and experience. Any attempt by a consumer of electricity or by any prospective employer of an electrical wireman to by-pass the statutory regulations is to be deplored. Appliances and fittings should be of the highest quality, purchased through recognized channels and from reputable merchants. Finally, the installation as a whole should comply with the relevant New Zealand and British Codes of Practice, which have been freely drawn upon in the compilation of this article.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE MAN BEHIND THE CAMERA

When you pick up an overseas magazine about houses and gardens—not the superbly illustrated kind like the Architectural Review or Forum but the run of the mill variety—you seldom stop to think how very good the photographs in it are. There are the rooms shown in depth and detail, clear and well lit; there are the gardens and the houses, almost as stereoscopic as life. Each photograph vividly but unobtrusively clarifies an editorial point, or rescues from banality an editorial remark. Photographic journalism abroad seems to be honest and competent and intelligent. When the photography is good, as it usually is, you take it for granted; it is only when it is bad that you notice it.

Now, since a magazine like Design Review is almost entirely concerned with the ‘visual’ arts, its very life depends on the quality of its photographs; and it can hardly be a secret to readers of the Review that architectural photography in New Zealand is, on the whole, careless, lazy, unimaginative, technically incompetent, and extremely expensive.

It would be worth knowing why this kind of photography in New Zealand is so poor. One can only guess: there is not enough demand for architectural work for anyone to specialize in it; possibly photographers haven’t the knowledge or the experience to do more than point the camera, click the shutter, and hope for the best?

Let us be generous and assume that lack of knowledge is the answer. If so, ignorance is no longer an excuse. For here is a book* which will not only teach the photographer his technical business, but will give him some idea of what his responsibilities towards his art should be and which, if he is not too hardenened by habits, will increase his sensibility.

The plates in the book show the author to be one of the great architectural photographers of the world. The text reveals him as a serious artist who writes with wit, modesty and style. Mr Gernsheim addresses himself, of course, to the professional photographer, but even the layman will discover as he reads, that his solemn, accepting stare is being tweaked into a comprehending, analytical vision of the things about him.

Planning, says Mr Gernsheim, is half the success of a photograph. Nothing must be left to chance. Luck should not enter into the photographer’s work at all. And clearly, the pains and the planning and the patience that produced the magnificent photographs in this book must have been inexhaustible. He tells of a commission for a shipping company which required new publicity photographs for its Mediterranean cruises. He knew that he would have only a few hours in each town. So he collected, weeks before he sailed, as many brochures and maps as he could. From these he worked out the aspect of every important building, planned in which order he should photograph them, and saved himself the trouble of dashing from place to place only to find the light wrong. One or two of the Mediterranean photographs are shown, and the result you may judge for yourself.

There is much more one could say about this book: for instance, that although it gives a great deal of new and practical advice, it
it infinitely more than a book of photographic tips. It creates a modish aesthetic of its own.

It only remains for every photographer who sees this notice to read the book. If he profits by it, he will help us all to see; if he does not, the blind will go on leading the blind.

G.L.G.

DESIGNERS IN BRITAIN

VOLUME 2

A biannual review of Graphic and Industrial Design compiled by the Society of Industrial Artists (Allan Wingate, London).

Designers in Britain, Volume 1 (1947), seemed to be almost too good to be true, and even tho the most optimistic readers must have wondered whether it would be possible to continue the series. Volume 2 sets all doubt at rest and Volume 3 is well under way. The present volume covers everything from 'trade marks to posters, from book-jackets to exhibitions, from carpets to leather goods, from furniture to iconography' and is a fine piece of printing and typography.

A brief foreword and four and a-half pages of nicely set indexes and table of contents and the book launches into some 250 pages of illustrations ending with a stimulating and well chosen section by student members of the Society of Industrial Artists. It is a most difficult book to write about because you are tempted from page to page and each perusal reveals something not previously noticed — gay and sensible nursery furniture, really interesting school furniture, clean-cut electrical fittings, tempting pottery and glass (decoration becoming richer), something new in hemp cord rugs, shapely leather goods and so on to the pictorial sections, posters, illustration and advertising. The advertisements at the end are worthy of the book and might easily be considered as a section illustrating good design in action.

The book is valuable to designers not only as a comprehensive review of contemporary work in many fields, but also as an excellent means of interesting and educating manufacturers and publishers and of fostering appropriate contacts. Such a book must go a long way towards making good design fashionable.

S. B. MACLENNAN

WHICH ARE YOU?

The American press defines high-brows as people who are addicted to garlic, ballet, constructivist sculpture, Bach and Schoenberg (with nothing in between), starkly functional furniture, cheap red wine, tweeds (no hats), avant-garde literature, 'little magazines' and criticism of criticism. The upper middle-brows, it says, go in for theatre, salads, regimental ties, Empire furniture and ornate lampstands, initialed silver cigarette-boxes, dry Martinis, Maillol, Brehm and Brahms, solid non-fiction and Causeries. The lower middle-brows like gadgets of all kinds, musical comedy, mass-produced salad-dressing, loud neck-ties and double-breasted suits, bridge, garden sculpture, book-club selections and whisky. The low-brows love beer, check sports-shirts, overstuffed furniture. Westerns, corned beef and cabbage, 'comics,' mantel-piece sculpture, jukebox music, dice and the Lodge.