Design Review

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ARCHITECTURE AND POLITICS—R. S. Parker
TWO HOUSES AT KARORI—E. W. Gerson
CRAFT AT THE ACADEMY—A. Mallet
A STONE CARVING—W. R. Allen
GRAMOPHONE NOTES—John Gray
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PAINT AND MODERN INTERIORS
CORRECT METHOD OF APPLICATION

With the advent of modern interior decoration as we know it today, paint has taken on a new importance. Before, it was merely a means of preservation and relief to masses of heavy wallpaper, but now it carries, sometimes solely, the responsibility for unifying the whole interior design and establishing the "atmosphere" of the room. Because of its new importance, far more attention should be paid to correct preparation of surfaces and application of paint than is sometimes done, particularly by amateurs. If the correct methods are used, the rewards are twofold. The painted surface is even, hard and without the slightest discolouration, and, secondly, its life is greatly lengthened.

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HERE AND THERE

Sharaway

It was not surprising to find Wellington's recent trade fair following the same haphazard and chaotic pattern as that of New Zealand cities. However some sort of plan was followed - a 'grid plan,' island stands and long straight avenues, accidentally granting prominence to displays of batteries or vacuum cleaners at the end of vistas. Where the grid plan petered out one found some odd kitchen sinks and window fittings propped in an abandoned fashion against the main wall of the building.

With no discernible route to follow one zigzagged across avenues, circumnavigated islands, retraced one's steps, eventually returning to the main entrance sure in the knowledge that one had seen soap bubbles and popcorn a dozen times, but by no means certain how many exhibits remained undiscovered — lost beyond recall.

Some deliberate methods had been adopted in the disposition of exhibits — that of infinite variety. Groceries were found hob-nobbing with radio on one side and stationery on the other — plastics next to paper bags — prams next to perspex — hosiery next to furniture — concrete mixers and waffles — the country store in excelsis. Yet this, one recalls, was an industrial exhibition produced by an urban community.

In Wellington city there are by-laws restricting the size of shop verandah fascias. A similar restriction was imposed upon stall canopies of the exhibition, the only apparent regulating line in the whole show. What happens above or below the fascia was nobody's business, except the stall holders, who were obviously anxious to display everything which they produced, sold or advocated — a typical scene in any shopping street of our city.

The products displayed indicated a high technical efficiency, but most goods designed in New Zealand were inferior to those modelled upon contemporary overseas designs. It was interesting to find that in the opinion of our furniture manufacturers the public is now ripe for an eighteenth century revival, that the modernistic trash which has been served up for some time is falling, that bedroom suites with cabriole legs, high curvaceous head and toe, finished in Southland beech veneer, heavily stained and polished to assimilate mahogany, is now a la mode. However there is still diversity and choice, for example in chairs combining with unhappy ingenuity the 'moderne' with the 'antique' — legs in bulbous pseudo-biuroque seat and back in modern suburban.

The comment on this contrived chaos came from the Government Court, where a notice said with the wisdom born of innocence: "Keep New Zealand Green!"

A new pattern is slowly emerging in our New Zealand countryside. The bitter struggle of the pioneers for survival changed the face of our primeval landscape, and, as Clough Williams-Ellis put it, the victory of man over nature was generally resounding and often resulted in complete massacre. But the old days of gaunt and blackened tree stumps are passing, and, with the growth of new trees and well-trimmed hedges a new man-made beauty is slowly coming about.

A journey through the countryside does indicate that man is not wholly vile, and there are definite signs that man and nature are working in harmony to produce the more pleasing prospect. But with man's victory complete and nature now playing the part of collaborator it seems unfortunate that we should continue our atrocity propaganda by adorning our highways with crude and ugly hoardings.

The rural scene, as charmingly depicted above, is all too familiar. There must surely be other less undesirable ways of informing the public that GREENS IS GREAT but that PLANKS ARE SO MUCH BETTER etc., etc. Perhaps it is our own fault for accepting and tolerating these eyesores. How about playing a little game next time you take a cross-country journey? Take notice of any particularly revolting hoardings and make a mental note to avoid like the plague the products so advertised. After your first attempt you may, of course, decide to go by air in future, but I do think that, given enough players, the blight would in time mysteriously and painlessly disappear.

The Association of New Zealand Art Societies has announced the conditions of the award of the National Travelling Scholarship in Architecture, 1951. The total value of the scholarships is £1,000 N.Z. and the period for which it is tenable is not less than two years. Applications, which close on 31 March, 1951, are to be made on forms obtainable from the Secretary of the Association of N.Z. Art Societies, the Secretary of the N.Z.I.A. or the Secretary of the Architectural Centre.
Architecture and Politics

R. P. Parker

Art may be influenced in various ways by the 'political man'—be he dictator, representative, official or taxpayer-voter. He may disinterestedly patronize the arts; employ artists to exalt his party or state; regiment them to impose his own value system upon the community; or encourage free reciprocation between artistic and other social activities.

The people who dominate politics are not of the same type in all ages or parts of the world. In their attitudes to art they have in common only the wish to dignify the ruling group and to induce respect for the machinery of government. Consider the Renaissance Prince, admired of Machiavelli, ruling by sword and poison, yet often a munificent and tolerant patron. And we have men like Bismarck or Frederick the Great, strong personal rulers, yet priding themselves in private life on their virtuosity with the fiddle, or fostering the genius of J. S. Bach. Perhaps pre-twentieth century politics favoured different kinds of personalities from those that flourished later. The cultivation of the 'whole man', and leisure for the purpose, were formerly valued even by the politically ambitious.

Industrial capitalist civilization has tended to produce political élites of Philistines. Not the orator, the bandit, or the military genius, but the organizer and the expert, the lawyer, accountant, manager, businessman, or union secretary, is the typical politician of today. (A Winston Churchill with his histories and water-colours is an exception proving the rule—an anachronism—one of the condottieri out of his time.) If you seek signs of Philistinism in modern politics, look about you at official architecture.

But there is still room today for the brand of politics to make a difference to the brand of architecture—as of other arts. How so, and what kind of a difference? Well, consider the history of the Russian Bolshevik state. In the beginning, what sweeping away of dusty tradition in art, education, culture and social relations! What experiment, what eager drinking in of the new ideas fermenting in the West—in building, the exploitation of freedom in design made possible by the diversity of industrial age materials and techniques. The lessons of the Bauhaus at Dessau were not lost upon Soviet designers like the creator of the pre-1930 building illustrated in Fig. 1. The young socialist state monopolized artistic patronage, but it was a liberal patron, fostering the free development of talent by providing equal opportunity for all.

Was it merely an accident, was it really a 'discovery of absolute values', or was it simply a case of political cause and effect, when the rise to power of Stalin, the supreme organizer and manager, was followed by a blighting blend of traditionalism and Philistinism, of vulgarization and vulgarity in the arts of every kind? Certainly great changes took place from the early thirties on. Instead of being the free expression of minds liberated from capitalist commercialism, official architecture in the U.S.S.R. joined the other arts in becoming a mere vehicle for a new ideology, the myth of the 'mass-state'. Functionalism, simplicity and experiment gave way to 'socialist realism'. This meant winning the masses to acceptance of an increasingly repressive state-bureaucratic apparatus, by pandering to the lowest common denominator of popular taste, and at the same time associating the current regime with pre-revolutionary military and nationalist traditions. The combination of these sometimes incongruous elements was not, of course, to be subordinated to unity of design. The result can be seen in Figs. 2 and 3. The freer styles which continued to be explored in the West were branded as 'decadent bourgeois formalism'.

By a delightful irony, the German Nazis attacked the modern trends in architecture as 'intellectual Bolshevism'. Apparently there was something too free, too individualistic about it, for both the Hitler and Stalin types of government. This does not for a moment mean that the two types of government were identical. Without going into the important political differences between them, it is enough to draw attention to differences between the forms of official architecture they fostered. The Soviet trend was to the stuffy, respectable pastiche of traditional styles. Nazi architecture alluded to those traditional styles (particularly Roman) which expressed the tawdry
1. A Russian shop built in the mid-twenties. Its design is as fresh and undated as if it was built yesterday.

2. Entrance to a sports ground in provincial Russia, 1939. Here Russian and Roman monumental styles are horribly mated to evoke in the ordinary man feelings of imperial grandeur and local pride. His wishes are the architect's laws.

3. A Russian dam, about 1939. The ornament, 17th century Italian, swallows up the engineering structure underneath.

4. United States, TVA dam, 1936. Architect and engineer have combined to produce this unadorned, civilised structure.
majesty of State and Party. But it developed a unity of its own—a dreadful integrity to the Nazi ideal of the superman: harsh, heavy, severe, brutal, physically powerful, spiritually dead. (Figs. 5, 8.) To this we must add that the economic, military and diplomatic policy of the Nazi government was naturally reflected in extravagant expenditure on building works intended to disguise unemployment, to prepare for war, or to impress the superficial observer, as on the occasion of the Olympic Games in 1936. (Fig. 7.)

Comparison of these examples with architecture under Mussolini’s Fascist dictatorship would, I think, correctly suggest that Fascism was much weaker, more diffident, rather more compromising in its impact on the Italian community, than the totalitarianism of the North. There were some attempts to recapture the grandiose atmosphere of classical Rome—but Italian architecture between the wars was not submerged by a thoroughgoing attempt at cultural regimentation. (Fig. 9.)

When we turn to the bourgeois democracies of the West we find, as by now we should expect, a much more complicated picture. In America, for example, private capital massively overshadowed the state—as symbolically, its skyscrapers dwarf all urban public buildings. And, in general, these embodiments of the power and wealth of capitalism reflect the solid values of the organizer-Philistines. A pedestrian utilitarianism has permitted the evolution of a style appropriate to modern business needs and industrial materials. (Fig. 10.) But the free artistic imagination has usually been subordinated to a conventional kind of ostentation. Individualism has taken the form of a rank disregard for communal problems such as traffic congestion or the blighting of human lives in the dark street canyons, office ‘light’ wells, and residential slums of the unplanned city.

The fact remains that liberal-democracies today are not governed by a homogeneous ruling class. A variety of aims and interests can get a hearing. In particular, the growth of professional and middle-class influence, backed by working-class demands, has intensified the role of the state as protector, patron, and planner, without monopolizing creative activity or stamping official art
7. Olympic Stadium, 1936: To impress foreigners and provide work for the unemployed, this expresses brutality, not strength.


and architecture with cultural uniformity. To be sure, there is still plenty of evidence of the perennial temptation to stereotype official architecture in stilted or monumental styles. Witness the nineteenth century addiction to classicism (surviving in Wellington Parliament House), the dullness of ‘post-office architecture’, the drab portentousness of the Stout Street ‘departmental building’, or the modernistic effect that so often goes with renovation or remodelling of old public buildings. But the accepted responsibilities of the state in the fields of town-planning and of those social services requiring buildings (libraries, schools, hospitals) have offered great opportunities to designers of many kinds. Both under ‘free-enterprise’ and ‘social-democratic’ kinds of democracy, interaction of the official and private architect makes possible a marriage of planning and experiment which has put public institutions in the van of architectural evolution. (Figs. 4, 11.)

It remains to reconcile this statement with something I said about Philistinism and politicians.

In the first place, from the point of view of free artistic achievement and development, it is a strength of the liberal-democratic states that their governments (unlike the Nazi and Soviet governments) have not monopolized the employment of architects, nor have they uniformly used architects under their control for the deliberate inculcation of political myths. Democracy permits the circulation of different individuals through positions of political power, which in itself guarantees a variety of outlooks.

In the second place, the popular representative's instinct for the conventional and the traditional has to some extent been counterbalanced by the growing influence of the permanent bureaucracy. While the public service remains politically free, neutral, and accessible to all classes, and if it continues to offer opportunities for creative administration, then we may expect that at least some imaginative and cultured people will have influence on the aesthetic aspects of government policy. Adventures in architecture in the bourgeois state have been made possible by the willingness of politicians occasionally to listen to advisers of this kind, and by the advisers' intelligent appreciation of the ideals of enlightened public service and private architects. The same general attitude would still be possible, but of course would become much more necessary, in a socialist democracy.
This carving in Green Horton Stone is one of the impressive progress works completed by W. R. Allen, who was awarded the 1949 National Travelling Scholarship in Art by the Association of New Zealand Art Societies. He is studying at the Royal College of Art, London.

With the arrival in Great Britain in September last year of Miss Sina Woolcott, the Association of New Zealand Art Societies now has three scholarship holders studying and working overseas.

William R. Allen, the Wellington-born sculptor who had studied at the Canterbury School of Art, reached London in June 1949, and was accepted by the Royal College of Art for the School of Sculpture under Professor Dobson. He has found time to do some commissioned work for two British sculptors, James Woodford, R.A., and N. Stillman, A.R.C.A. For the former he has executed a plaster relief panel to be finished in stone for the Allied War Cemetery at Caserta, Italy; for the latter, a large plaster abstract-shape display stand for the British Industries Fair Exhibition.

Margaret Thompson, the Elam-trained winner of the 1949 award, arrived in London in January 1950. Her chief interest is in various forms of church decoration, glass-staining in particular. She has visited cathedrals and churches in Britain and Europe and has first-hand experience of the workshops and studies where the craft is practised. Miss Thompson is taking a part-time course at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London under Mr Spear, a specialist in stained-glass work.
TWO HOUSES AT KARORI, WELLINGTON

Architect: E. W. Gerson
These houses were designed for a hill-side slope in Wellington. The photographs show the upper house (in the plan) which was built for the architect's own occupation. The whole conception is extremely simple. The houses contrast well with the surrounding hills, and although they are entirely separate the effect from the road is of a simple mass. The interior is particularly worth looking at because of the apparently artless blending of handsome old furniture, inexpensive everyday furniture, and carefully designed and well-made contemporary furniture. In the dining end of the living room, for example, there is a fine Empire cupboard next to a set of quite ordinary 'Windsor' chairs. The late eighteenth century table in the sitting room is perfectly at home standing on Samoan matting near chairs covered in modern Swedish printed linen. The effect has of course been very carefully contrived, but the result is casual and charming.
DURING August of this year the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts staged a Craft Exhibition. Craftsmen throughout New Zealand were invited to exhibit, and so the result might be regarded as presenting a pretty representative indication of the state of Craft in the Dominion. On the whole the effort was successful. The most encouraging features were probably the surprisingly keen interest taken in the Exhibition and the fact that at least some of the work was outstandingly good. Those few outstanding people are very important, for they set the standard. Half a dozen artists of the calibre of Frances Hodgkins working in New Zealand could put us on the map artistically—no matter how many or how few the mediocre following. The trouble is, of course, that the outstanding people are generally attracted abroad and we can offer no inducement to bring them back again.

William Newland, of Masterton, went overseas on military service, spent three years at an Art School on a scholarship, thought he would like to try pottery, discovered he had a genuine flair and is now teaching at the Central in London and lecturing at London University. Kenneth Clark, of Wellington, did very much the same. Both are first-rate potters, both happened to be coming to New Zealand on leave and both brought work for the Craft Show. Both have gone back again. Their work

The top photograph shows part of the pottery section. Typography and bookcraft are shown in the bottom photograph. The illustrations on the wall are by George Woods.
Passion Flower, wood engraving by Stewart Maclean.

was admired and it was purchased. They loved being home, and with any prospect of being able to carry on their work they would probably have been glad to remain here. We can only hope that they will eventually return, but we must realise that the greater their further success overseas the less our chance of getting them back. Quite a number of New Zealanders have become eminent as designers and craftsmen abroad.

Mervyn Taylor is one of the very few New Zealand artists who has succeeded in becoming a full-time designer-craftsman. How he manages it is a problem, though his exhibits in the Craft Show, while not showing his complete range, did give some indication of a versatility which must help.

He is to be congratulated on maintaining his integrity in all that he undertakes. It was a good thing that the rules governing the exhibition enabled him to present such a comprehensive showing.

Mervyn Taylor, too, was one of the very few who exhibited drawings. The absence of drawings from so many of the painters suggests a weakness that is felt in practically every art exhibition in New Zealand. The brush has become something simply to apply colour over inadequate drawing. So many paintings lack the structure that grows from sound draughtsmanship—not merely academic drawing, but searching and expressive drawing. Bar, George Woods, Stewart Maclean, H. V. Miller, R. J. Waghorn, Joan Dukes, Guy Ngan and William Newland all showed worthwhile drawings, and the majority of them showed crafts as well. There was so much embroidery which made you think of hours of meticulous work, infinite patience and tired eyes, that it was refreshing to see such varied and inventive stitchery by Joan Dukes. Her delightful embroidery was such good fun with the needle and thread. Margaret Nairn used Maori motifs as they should be used, adapting them admirably to needlework. The work of her students made a stimulating display.

Other highlights of the Show were jewellery by Edith Morris and Eileen Rose, book binding by Dorothy Maclean, sculpture by Margaret Garland, hand loom weaving by Marguerite Webb, Susan Jensen and Isabelle Amodeo, spinning and dyeing by
Katharine Phillips, and rugs by Joyce Lloyds and Lilian Martin. David Driver was the discovery. His modest display of pottery was outstanding in the midst of more pretentious wares. In the much-too-small architectural section Patience and Gabites saved the day.

There were only four printed fabrics. Of course, people just can't buy lengths of cloth and print them for fun. It becomes costly and they take some storing when left on the designer's hands. It must be difficult for would-be purchasers to find an economic use for a piece of material that happens to be of a length and width that seemed to suit the designer. Perhaps designs on paper or on a sample piece of cloth would enable the purchaser to place an order — though the display would be less attractive.

Furniture design was conspicuous by its absence. It is difficult for the furniture designer to display his wares. Pieces of furniture are bulky and easily damaged in transit. Drawings and photographs are much less impressive than the actual pieces, but at least they give some idea and it's a pity that any opportunity of showing good design should be neglected. If designers like Robert Lowry, Denis Glover, Leo Bensemann and Dr J. C. Beaglehole had added to the small group of interesting exhibits, typography and lettering really could have been an important section.

An exhibition cannot be better than the work sent in, and it does seem a pity that in fields where we know there are designers and craftsmen doing good work there are blanks in such an exhibition. The general standard of the exhibition could be raised and it would enable the selection committee to be more discerning with works of doubtful quality.

I take my hat off to those people who so obviously went to no end of trouble to send in really good things. Their work shone out and their work alone made the exhibition worth while.

A. Mallet.
NEW RECORDS BY CAMPOLI
Bach: Sonata No. 4 in D minor for solo violin. Decca AK1955-7 (12in.—24s).
Mendelssohn: Concerto in E minor, op. 64, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Eduard van Beinum. Decca AX1950-2 (12in.).

Both these sets may be considered not only as magnificent souvenirs of a great artist's visit to this country, but as worthy additions in their own right to the recorded repertoire. The Bach fourth sonata (better known as Partita No. 2) has not previously been available here complete, and even the famous Chaconne with which it ends is perhaps better known in transcriptions for piano and even orchestra. For the general music lover this work is perhaps the most agreeable of the Bach solo sonatas — the inclusion of the Chaconne ensures a better sense of climax, than the odd dance movements which close some of the others. Campoli's performance is of almost overwhelming beauty and the recording here is fully worthy of it.

Owing to the automatic coupling of the set it would not be possible to obtain the Chaconne separately — those who want that piece alone may care to consider rival versions by Giocunda de Vito (HMV DB19632-3) and by Menuhin (DB19589-90). The Menuhin is by now quite an old recording but has long been considered a classic performance — the de Vito (she is a young Italian violinist who has recently come into prominence) is magnificently alive and colourful. But for the sake of having the whole work on three records I should hesitatingly recommend the Campoli.

At the time of writing it is not known whether the (Campoli) Mendelssohn concerto will be released in this country. There is another new version from HMV, featuring Heifetz and Beecham, which it is expected, will be offered here. It may be said that the general consensus of opinion overseas is heavily in favour of the Campoli performance. The work is flawlessly played by the soloist, well accompanied under van Beinum, and recorded as well as Decca know how. A pleasant point is that the first movement ends in the middle of a side — thus the effective link which the composer supplied between the first and second movements is not lost by having to turn over the disc. It is many years since we had a release of this most pleasant of violin concertos — of the three older sets still surviving in the catalogue my choice would be for the Szegedy-Beecham. I rather think most prospective buyers will await the Campoli.

HAYDN SYMPHONIES
No. 40 in F Major. HMV DB19623-4
*No. 102 in B flat. HMV DB19449-51 both played by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra cond. Beecham.

Here we have two works from virtually opposite ends of Haydn's career. The No. 40 in F, which I believe was composed around 1763, has much of the element of a serenade or divertimento — it was written for the esthetic family, and the music as such is disarmingly friendly. This is emphatically a set for all who enjoy the eighteenth century idiom, and immensely valuable to admirers of Haydn's style, as it is the earliest of his symphonies which has so far been made available here on records. The playing and recording are alike first rate.

We have waited a long time for No. 102 in B flat — an earlier HMV version under Koussevitzky was never made a local release. One of the most splendid of the so-called 'London' series composed during the composer's visit to that city, this work seems fully entitled to rank with any of them and it is set forth in a vigorous performance by Sir Thomas in his most assured style. A slight hardness of tone in the more strenuous passages goes for nothing beside the splendour of the music and the intense authority of the playing. This is Haydn at his greatest. Very highly recommended.

RECORDS BY COLIN FORSLER
Berkeley: Six Preludes. HMV C3940.
Frohoff: Sonata No. 3 op. 28, HMV C3941.
Rachmaninoff: Prelude in E minor op. 23/4
Szymanowski: Etude in Bb minor op. 3/4
HMV C3942 (all 12in.—6s ea.).

This is an interesting and important issue. So far as I know it comprises the first 12in. records of serious music actually presented by local HMV in Wellington. The labels are scarcely as elegant as those on English records, but the recordings as such are good and on my copies at least the surfaces are quiet and smooth. With admirable business sense, the discs were released to coincide with the arrival of the pianist himself, and record music from the repertoire of his recent concert tour.

*Not yet issued locally.

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Furthermore, it is a matter for satisfaction that Mr. Horsley is now featured on such a famous label of record. Even more a cause for pleasure is that his selection of pieces shows bold exploration of new pianistic territory — all the music is available on records for the first time. This may seem a disadvantage from some points of view — I hear that dealers who optimistically ordered substantial stocks of the Horsley discs are wishing they could more easily lighten their shelves of them. If so, this may be taken as indicative of the traditional conservatism of record buyers. The most impressive piece is probably the Szymanowski etude — the Rachmaninov prelude on the reverse with its violent changes of mood makes a powerful contrast — this is the disc which I think should appeal to most people. The Prokofiev sonata is modernism of a mild sort and quite worth your attention, certainly for the virtuosity of the playing, and Berkeley's brief preludes are fascinating pieces which improve on acquaintance. A final word about the piano tone — it is among the most realistic and convincing samples we have had on records.

**BEETHOVEN**

Symphony No. 1 in C, op. 21. Philharmonic — Symphony Orchestra of New York cond. Bruno Walter. Columbia LX8681-4 Toscanini's pre-war version with the BBC orchestra (HMV DB8537-40) has been the standard set for New Zealand these last ten years. Being an immaculate performance and (since it was made in England) an excellent recording, it cannot be said that this new one displaces it entirely. But there is a danger in getting to know one recorded version of a standard work until one is inclined to regard it as the only possible interpretation. Those familiar with the Toscanini set may regard Bruno Walter's as inferior merely because it is different. Yet I maintain that in its way it is as valuable a contribution to the long list of Beethoven recordings. The music has been somewhat clumsily divided up to occupy eight sides (one side, indeed, contains the largest amount of vacant space I have yet seen on a 12in. disc) but the virile measured performance is most enjoyable and the recordings, by American standards, is extraordinarily good. Those who do not yet possess a Beethoven Symphony No. 1 are urged to give this one a hearing.

**SHORTER NOTICES**

Gounod: Faust — Ballads of the King of Thule and Jewel Song, Victoria de la Angeles and orch. cond. Suskind. HMV DB6938.

COMMENDED to the notice of all lovers of fine singing, but especially those who consider themselves rather above Marguerite, her spinning wheel and her childish delight in a box of jewellery. Has there ever been a recorded version more completely in the spirit of Gounod's guileless heroine?

Brahms: Variations on a theme of Haydn (5 sides); Hungarian dances Nos. 2,3 Vienna Phil. orch. — Furtwangler. HMV DB9402-4. A de luxe performance, brilliantly conducted and spaciously recorded. The use of five sides bumps up the price considerably, but the two relatively unfamiliar dances are...
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BOOK REVIEW

EDWARD BAWDEN


This book is one of the splendid series of English Masters of Black and White. The book is in two sections, a biographical account and the drawings. The latter, reproduced as they were intended as line blocks in black and white, are excellent and the former, written by Robert Harling, presents an intimate picture of Bawden as a man and as an artist.

Edward Bawden, C.B.E., R.I., A.R.A., F.S.I.A., is unique in many ways. He is a leading painter in watercolours, a mural painter, a lithographer and engraver, a designer of posters, book jackets and book illustrations, and he was one of the first to realise the possibilities of the humble linocut. This most versatile artist seems to be able to work with distinction in any medium. His work is always personal and inimitable. He is modest, shy, tall, slim, full of nervous energy and a tiger for work.

At the age of seven he attended Braintree High School. At about eleven he had drawing lessons from the daughter of a Congregational Minister. At thirteen he went to the Friends' School at Saffron Walden. At fifteen he spent a day a week at Cambridge Art School, becoming a full time student in the following year. At nineteen a Royal Exhibition for Writing and Illuminating took him to Royal College. He arrived at the College in 1922, on the same day as Eric Ravilious and the two became friends, and friendly competitors until the latter's death in Iceland in 1942.

E. W. Tyrwhitt was Professor of Design and Bawden says that he is more indebted to him than to any other artist. After three years he was awarded the Travelling Scholarship in Design and went to Rome, Venice, Padua, Florence and Naples. He discovered the Baroque as 'the most deliberately beautiful style ever invented'.

And then he started his career in earnest—but it's all in the book and it's fascinating reading.

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