
This is the first monograph on the artist, designer and collector Enid Marx. It aims to present the range and quality of her work as a textile artist, industrial designer, book illustrator, stamp designer, print-maker, writer, teacher and campaigner to wider audiences and to examine ‘the life of the person behind it’ (p 8). Author Alan Powers certainly achieves the former, although his success with the latter is arguably more limited.

The book, which is lavishly illustrated, is organised into six chapters that develop chronologically and thematically. Opening with the early years: her Jewish émigré, middle-class family in North London, education at Roedean and the Royal College of Art, it moves onto Marx’s apprenticeship in block-printed textiles with Phyllis Barron and Dorothy Larcher and her interwar work as a textile designer-maker. Next comes design for industry: the famous upholstery designs for London Underground (1937), work for the Utility scheme, and election as a Royal Designer for Industry (RDI). Powers also looks at lesser known excursions in the 1950s and 1960s: pattern designs for carpets, ceramic tiles, laminates and leather. Involving abstract and figurative motifs – Marx’s fascination with Popular Art was growing at this time – she combined a serious commitment to design for a moral and social purpose with a sense of fun. Designs for embossed linings for leather luggage for air travel, for instance, involved stylised aeroplanes; Marx apparently loved to recount how the propellers had to be removed when jet planes came in (p 84).

Chapter four considers designs for paper, print and publishing, from decorative pattern papers for the Curwen Press to covers for Chatto & Windus and illustrated children’s books. *Bulgy the Barrage Balloon* (1941) was a particular favourite. Marx’s interest in Popular Art, which she shared with her life-long friend and companion Margaret Lambert, is the focus of chapter five which examines their belief in a ‘useable past’ grounded in the history of everyday life as a ‘model for future forms’ (p 123). ‘Barge decoration’ or ‘Pedlar Dolls’ communicated folk traditions in a ‘new register’ (p 126) stimulating an authentic modern language of decoration. Now part of the ‘British Folk Art Collection’
at Compton Verney, Warwickshire, the Marx-Lambert collection is a significant inspiration for the current interest in folk art among artists such as Jeremy Deller.

The section on block-printed textiles will be of particular interest to readers. Powers argues convincingly for the international significance of this work. His explication of process and attention to the specificities of pattern design within in the parameters that Marx set herself is compelling. Detailed analysis of individual designs, repeats and motifs extrapolate her sensitivity to figure-ground relationship, balancing positive and negative shapes, colour, texture, and unity of material and process. In some ways, however, the final chapter ‘Essential Marx’, which concentrates on her work as a design teacher and campaigner, is most revealing in terms of legacy. Marx envisaged art schools as laboratories not only for industry but also for life, a view that chimes with V&A Director Tristram Hunt’s recently launched initiative DesignLab Nation, which promotes the social value of design thinking through hands-on making, something surely Marx would have approved of.

Drawing on previously unseen archival sources, this book makes a significant contribution to redressing ‘the balance’ (p 8), enabling Marx’s work to be more widely known and appreciated. Yet, as Powers acknowledges, it is not definitive. Some of the most poignant material - from small indignities such as being replaced by Graham Sutherland at the Ruskin School of Art (Marx later opposed his election as an RDI on the grounds that he was a painter) to her time in Freudian analysis – speaks of the challenges faced by women living unconventional lives, the strategies they adopted and the sometimes terrible price exacted. Marx’s analysis was paid for by Francesca Allinson, a friend who tragically took her own. An earlier letter from Allinson had attempted to allay Marx’s youthful anxieties about ‘not getting picked up’ by a man, reassuring her that she was one of the few people she knew ‘who really know how to love’ (p 28). Marx was an outsider, at one point Powers terms her a ‘misfit’ (p 61). She, nevertheless, also saw herself as one of a group, part of a wider movement of professional women working in the arts and culture during the Twentieth Century.
about whom too little is yet known. For them, as for Marx, a feminist lens is required to probe deeper into understanding more about the work and the lives of the women behind it.

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Join exhibition co-curator Dr Alan Powers for a personal introduction to the work of Enid Marx (1902-1998), a textile designer, printmaker and illustrator who, alongside her contemporaries Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden, defined mid-20th century design. The exhibition will be open late for ticket holders and there will be the opportunity to buy a signed copy of Dr Alan Powers™ latest book, Enid Marx: The Pleasures of Pattern. Full details. + Google Calendar + iCal Export. THE designer and artist Enid Marx had a passion for patterns. It was an enduring love affair which led her to amass, from early childhood, an important collection of decorative objects from fabrics, cigarette cards and inn signs to ceramics, corn dollies and even gingerbread moulds. She also collected French poetry books covered in pattern papers, children's books and toy theatre sheets - she and Eric Ravilious used to visit Pollock’s shop in Hoxton where they watched women employees hand-colour the pattern sheets. Her first encouragement to draw had come at Roedean School where the enlightened Head of Art, Dorothy Martin, let her young pupils draw from nudes. Marx famously exports Hegel’s mysticism into a materialistic version where the World-Spirit operates upon class relations rather than the interconnectedness of all things, and where you don’t come out and call it the World-Spirit but he basically keeps the system intact. So once the World-Spirit resolves the dichotomy between Capitalist and Proletariat, then it can more completely incarnate itself and move on to the next problem. Enid Marx DESIGN FOR TODAY. Enid Marx was a contemporary of Ravilious and Bawden at The Royal College, a part of Nash’s talented generation who were, and continue to be, so influential. Marx has never quite caught the popular imagination in the way that her male contemporaries have done so. To date there has never been a major. ‘Enid Marx: The Pleasures of Pattern’ by Alan Powers. This is the first monograph on the work of Enid Marx (1902-1998), a leading artist, designer, collector and writer, who played an important role in British cultural life in the second half of the 20th century. Book Jacket Marx Balloons Books Pattern Colour Illustrations Jackets Livros. Image result for enid marx xmas. Enid Marx book. Read reviews from world’s largest community for readers. This is the first monograph on the work of Enid Marx (1902-1998), a leading arti... Goodreads helps you keep track of books you want to read. Start by marking ÆœEnid Marx: The Pleasures of PatternÆ as Want to Read: Want to Read saving... Want to Read.