

O'Rorke, Brian 1901 - 1974

Edward Brian O'Rorke [commonly known as Brian O'Rorke] was born in Christchurch [or Wellington - sources differ], New Zealand on 14 June 1901. He moved to England in his youth with his family and studied architecture at Cambridge University and the Architectural Association Schools, London. He was an RIBA Archibald Dawnay Scholar in 1926 and RIBA Recognised Schools Bronze Medallist the same year. In 1931 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) and later a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA).

After leaving the AA he established his own architecture and design office in London. Among his first projects were the design of a bachelor's room in a London house ['Decorative Art' 1932 p.37]; the redecoration of a music room for Mrs Robert Solomon ['Decorative Art' 1933 pp.48, 61]; the conversion of a studio into a living room in Chelsea, London ['Decorative Art' 1933 p.47] ; and the design of the interiors of the Mayor Gallery in London. The latter project impressed Colin Anderson, a director of the Orient Shipping Company, who commissioned O'Rorke to supervise the fit-out of the company's new liner, S.S. 'Orient' (launched in 1934). He later designed the interiors of her sister ship, S.S. 'Orcades' (launched in 1937), and the Orient Line ships S.S. 'Oronsay' (launched 1951) and S.S. 'Orsova' (launched 1954). O'Rorke, in addition, designed hotel interiors, including the Berkeley Hotel, London (1966-72); aircraft interiors, including the Vickers VC.1 Viking airliner (1947-48); and trains, including three London, Midland & Scottish (L.M.S.) royal carriages for King George VI and Queen Elizabeth (1941). Architectural projects included buildings for the Metropolitan Police in London; Ashcombe Tower, a country house in Dawlish, Devon (1935); the Orient Line Building in Sydney, New South Wales (with Fowell McConnell & Mansfield, 1938); the Royal Observatory at Herstmonceaux in Sussex (1953-58); buildings for Nottingham University (1950s and 1960s; and various private houses, flats, factories, offices, etc.. With F.H.K. Henrion, O'Rorke designed the Natural Scene and the Country pavilions for the 1951 Festival of Britain.

O'Rorke also designed the furniture for several of his interior design and architectural schemes. He was elected a Royal Designer for Industry (RDI) by the Royal Society of Arts in 1939. He was elected a Royal Academician (RA). O'Rorke died on 1 March 1974.

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Jenkins, Douglas Lloyd. 40 legends of New Zealand design. Auckland, New Zealand: Random House New Zealand, 2006

Links

- State Library of New South Wales https://search.sl.nsw.gov.au/primo-explore/search?vid=SLNSW&tab=default_tab&highlight=true&query=any%2Ccontains%2Conly%22%3ESearch%3C/span%3E%3Ci%20class%3D%22slnsw-icon%20slnsw-icon-ZoomOL2%22%3E%3C/i%3E&form_build_id=form-K4O9rWM0W5q2Hnlimm_B0pN-EWSFOQoEIhUITRAePRI&form_id=_slnsw_sitewide_primo_search_form
- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_O%27Rorke
- Royal Academy of Arts Collections <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/name/brian-ororke-ra>
- University of Brighton Design Archives <https://blogs.brighton.ac.uk/royaldesigners/2016/06/06/brian-ororke/>
- Architectural Association Collections <http://collectionsblog.aaschool.ac.uk/designing-for-speed-and-style-brian-ororke-and-the-ss-orion/>
- Exploring British Design <http://exploredesign.archiveshub.ac.uk/person/?id=/ebd/person/http%253A/viaf.org/viaf/9>
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