

Gutmann, Robert 1910 - 1981

Robert Gutmann was born in Augsburg, Germany, on 18 April 1910 and trained as an architecture and furniture designer at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Stuttgart, where he studied under Adolph Schneck from 1934. Because of his anti-Nazi activities he was expelled and prevented from continuing his studies. He then worked as a freelance architect and furniture designer until 1937 when he became an assistant to Professor Fritz Breuhaus in Berlin.

In June 1939 and his Jewish wife left Germany for England. As an alien, he was interned from June 1940 to April 1941. Following his release he worked in the planning department of SS Cars [later Jaguar Cars] in Coventry. In 1945, with the war over, he joined the Design Research Unity (DRU), where he worked with Misha Black, Milner Gray, and others on the design of shops, offices, restaurants, exhibition stands and various products. With Milner Gray, designed the stand for Ilford Ltd. at the British Industries Fair held at Olympia, London, in 1947 and 1948. He also participated in the 'Britain Can Make It' exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London in 1946, and the Festival of Britain in 1951.

While working at SS Cars during the war he met Günther Hoffstead (1921-?), and, after work, in the evenings, taught him architecture (1941-45). Later, following the war, he collaborated with Hoffstead in the design of exhibition stands and in a range of office furniture for Planmöbel. Gutmann taught design at the Royal College of Art in London. He was a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (FSIAD) and and was actively involved in the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID). In the late 1960s he was appointed director of the Rat für Formgebung/German Design Council in Frankfurt am Main. Gutmann died in London on 22 August 1981.

Worked in

Germany

UK

Bibliography

Benton, Charlotte. A different world: emigre architects in Britain 1928-1958. London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1976

Links

Yves Vincent Grossmann [Text in German - archived]

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