

## **Crosby, Theo 1925 - 1994**

Theo Crosby was born in Mafeking, South Africa, on 3 April 1925. After training as an architect at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg (B.Arch., 1947), he moved to London, England, where he studied at Sir John Cass School, Central School of Arts and Crafts, and at St. Martin's School of Art (1947-56). While a student, he worked as an assistant architect at Fry Drew & Partners and Fry Drew Drake & Lasdun in London (1947-52), and as technical editor of 'Architectural Design' (1953-62). He was then employed as chief architect by Taylor Woodrow on the Euston Station project in London (1962-64).

Following the departure of Bob Gill from the London-based design firm Fletcher-Forbes-Gill [established by Alan Fletcher, Colin Forbes and Gill in 1962] in 1967, Crosby stepped in, and the studio was re-formed as Crosby-Fletcher-Forbes. When, in 1972, they were joined by the designers Mervyn Kurlansky and Kenneth Grange, the studio was renamed Pentagram.

In addition to his work as an architect, Crosby also designed interiors and exhibitions. Notable projects by him included the design of the 'This is Tomorrow' exhibition at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London (with Germano Facetti and Edward Wright, 1956); the 'Architecture of Technology' exhibition at the International Union of Architects in London (1961); the British Section of the XIII. Triennale di Milano (with Natasha Kroll, 1964); the Industry section in the British pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal (1967); the interior of the 'Lookout' observation lounge on the 'Queen Elizabeth II' (1968); the Cape Universal Building Products display at the 'International Building Exhibition in London (1969); interior of offices for Rowe Rudd in Moorgate, London (1969); conversion of the interior of premises in Paddington as offices for the advertising agency Boase Massimi Pollit (1972, 1979); 'The Environment Game' exhibition at the Hayward Gallery in London (1973); conversion and interiors at Malaysia House in London (1975); office interiors for the advertising agency Geers Gross in London (1975, 1984); the 'British Genius' exhibition at Battersea Park, London (1976); refurbishment of the interiors of Unilever House in London (1978-83); reconstruction and the museum complex for the Globe Theatre on the South Bank, London (completed by John Greenfield, 1997); the 'Festival of Architecture' exhibition in London (1984); interior of the Nederlandse Middelstande Bank in Amsterdam (1984); the Battle of Britain monument in London (1987); and offices for solicitors Forsythe

Kerman in London (1989). In 1990 Crosby was appointed professor of Architecture at the Royal College of Art in London (1990). Crosby was the author of 'Architecture: City Sense' (London: Studio Vista, 1965), 'The Necessary Monument' (London: Studio Vista, 1970), 'how to Play the Environment Game' (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973), 'Lets Build a Monument' (London: Pentagram, 1987), 'The Battle of Britain Monument' (London: Pentagram, 1987), and 'Stonehenge Tomorrow', with Peter Lloyd (Kingston, England: University of Kingston, 1992).

Crosby was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1948, a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (FSIAD) in 1964, a member of the Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI) in 1966, and an Associate of the Royal Academy of Art (ARA) in 1982. He was also a member of the Akademie der Künste in Berlin. He received the Gran Premio at the XIII. Triennale di Milano (1964) and two Architectural Heritage Year Awards (1973). Theo Crosby died in London on 12 September 1994.

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Kei, Juliana. Pessimist Utopia: Theo Crosby 1950-1990. PhD thesis, Royal College of Art, 2019

Links

- University of Brighton. Theo Crosby Archive  
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- Peter Rawsthorne. 'Obituary: Professor Theo Crosby' The Independent 15 September 1994 <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/obituary-professor-theo-crosby-1448941.html>
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theo\\_Crosby](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theo_Crosby)
- Artist Biographies [Subscription service]  
<https://www.artbiogs.co.uk/1/artists/crosby-theo>
- Alan Powers, 'Crosby, Theo (1925–1994)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, Sept 2011 [Subscription service]  
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/54828>
- UK Modern House [http://www.ukmoho.co.uk/html/architect/Theo\\_Crosby.html](http://www.ukmoho.co.uk/html/architect/Theo_Crosby.html)
- Whitechapel Gallery. Theo Crosby: A Life and Legacy  
<https://www.whitechapelgallery.org/events/deyan-sudjic-theo-crosby/>
- National Portrait Gallery, London  
<https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp69023/theo-crosby>

- Valeria Carullo. Theo Crosby, 1925-1994. RIBA Journal 11 March 2015  
<https://www.ribaj.com/culture/theo-crosby-pentagram>
- AGI. Alliance Graphique Internationale. Theo Crosby, UK (1966) <https://a-g-i.org/user/theocrosby/view/projects>
- Exploring British Design  
<http://exploredesign.archiveshub.ac.uk/person/?id=/ebd/person/http%253A/viaf.org/viaf/9>
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- National Art Library Catalogue <https://nal-vam.on.worldcat.org/search?databaseList=&queryString=Theo%20Crosby>