

Benjamin, Elisabeth 1908 - 1999

Rose Elisabeth Benjamin [commonly known as Elisabeth Benjamin; also known as Rose Elisabeth Nagelschmidt] was born in Brondesbury, Middlesex [now London], England in on 7 December 1908. From 1927 to 1932 she studied at the Architectural Association in London where her contemporaries included Anthony Chitty, Michael Dugdale, Godfrey Samuel Val Harding, and Francis Chitty, founder members of the Tecton group.

On leaving the AA, she was employed in the office of Edwin Lutyens in 1932-33, during which time she worked on Lutyen's design for the font of the crypt of Liverpool Cathedral. She also designed a screen for His Highness the Gaekwar of Baroda's palace in New Delhi.

The first independent commission received by Benjamin was No.1 Fitzroy Park, a house for Dr Edith Summerskill in Highgate, London (1934) Two other notable houses she designed at this time were 55 Victoria Drive in Wimbledon, London (1934-35) in collaboration with [Eugen Carl Kaufmann](#) (1892-1984), and 'St George and Dragon House (formerly known as East Wall) in Hedgerley Lane, Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire (1936-37), with [Godfrey Samuel](#). Each three of these houses were very much in the Modernist style.

Benjamin was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1934. She was also a member of the [MARS. Modern Architectural Research Group](#), and contributed to the MARS Group's section of the New Homes for Old exhibition at Olympia in 1934.

In 1937 she married Joachim Gunter Nagelschmidt (1906-1901), an agricultural research chemist, and left architectural practice to have a family. It was her aim to return to the profession, however, the birth of her two daughters, the outbreak of World War Two, and the fact that the family moved first to Cornwall, and then to Derbyshire, which meant that she became far removed from the centre of architectural activity in London. She did some minor architectural work during the post-war years, and an inn sign designed by her and Archibald Carne for 'The Blue Anchor' pub owned by St Austell Brewery Ltd. in St. Austell, Cornwall was shown in the Inn Crafts Exhibition organized by the Central Institute of Art and Design for the Brewers Society in 1948.

After her husband's death in 1981, she returned to London where she worked as a consultant for the Catholic Housing Association.

In the mid-1930s Benjamin had a studio at 42 South Molton Street, London. Her address was given as 20 Christchurch Avenue, Brondesbury, Middlesex in 1939. He died in London on 29 March 1999.

Worked in

UK

Works

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Bibliography

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Benjamin, Elisabeth and Walker, Lynne. 'Interview with Elisabeth Benjamin'. Twentieth Century Architecture. The Journal of the Twentieth Century Society [The Modern House Revisited special issue] no.2, 1996 pp.74-84

Powers, Alan. Modern. The Modern Movement in Britain. London: Merrell, 2005

Links

- Lynne Walker. 'Obituary: Elisabeth Benjamin' The Independent 6 April 1999 <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-elisabeth-benjamin-1085606.html>
- Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elisabeth_Benjamin
- RIBA. Elisabeth Benjamins design for a house Buckinghamshire 1936 <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/knowledge-landing-page/elisabeth-benjamins-design-for-a-house-buckinghamshire-1936>