

## Hoffstead, Günther 1921 - ?

Günther Hoffstead was born in Berlin, Germany, in 1921. He had hoped to study architecture, but, being Jewish, was prevented from doing so under the Nazi's race laws; instead he trained as a cabinetmaker. In January 1938, at the age of 16, moved to England, where he obtained work as a trainee designer with L. Lazarus & Sons Ltd. Following the outbreak of World War Two, Hoffstead was interned on the Isle of Man. Upon his release he was employed as a draughtsman in the planning department of SS Cars [later Jaguar Cars] in Coventry, where he was employed on plant layout and aircraft repairs.

While at SS Cars he met Robert Gutmann (1910-1981), a fellow émigré, who had trained as an architect in Germany. After work, in the evenings, Hoffstead studied architecture with Gutmann (1941-45). He also trained as an engineer and in 1945 was awarded a Higher National Certificate in Aero-Engineering.

Between 1945 and 1949 he worked with British Plimber Ltd. in Rainham, Essex, on the developing of a chipboard and in the design of plant for the British Industries Fair. By 1950 he had moved to London where he began working as an exhibition, furniture, product and engineering designer. He also designed shops and interiors. He designed several exhibitions in association with Misha Black, Milner Gray and Robert Gutmann of the Design Research Unit.

Hoffstead's participated in the Festival of Britain in 1951, designing a section of the Dome of Discovery and the International Press Club. In 1957 he designed the stand for the Royal Agricultural Society of Kenya at the Royal Show in Norwich, England. Hoffstead designed the British contribution to the Exposition Universelle et Internationale (Expo 58) in Brussels in 1958. He also designed the Tercentenary Exhibition of the Royal Society at Burlington House in London.

Among his clients were the General Post Office [later British Telecom], and the Atomic Energy Authority, and British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), for whom he designed an all-in-one in-flight meal tray. During the 1950s with Robert Gutmann he designed a range of office furniture for Planmöbel. He also acted as consultant for Schreiber furniture and L. Lazarus & Sons' Uniflex Furniture.

From the later 1950s onwards Hoffstead worked on a number of architectural projects. These included several private houses, including his own, in Golders Park Close, London (1958-59); the conversions of blocks of flats for Regional

Properties; and a factory for Uniflex in Edmonton, London. Together with Misha Black, he was responsible for the refurbishment of the New London Synagogue, and built a new synagogue hall and offices in the mid 1960s. With Black, he also designed a luncheon club for the head office of Barclay's Bank. Hoffstead was elected a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (FSIAD).

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- Vintage Retro <http://www.vintageretro.co.uk/amazing-uniflex-bedroom-suite-designed-gunther-hoffstead/>