

Gross, Fritz Mai 1897 - 1969

Fritz Mai Gross [commonly known as Fritz M. Gross; also known as F.M. Gross] was born in Bielitz, Austria-Hungary [now Bielsko-Biala, Poland] on 24 February 1897. He trained as an architect at the University of Vienna, and under the architect Adolph Loos. He also studied painting at the Akademia Sztuk Pięknych w Krakowie/Cracow Academy of Fine Arts in Poland under Juljan Falat and Jakob Glasner, and in Paris. He then practised as an architect, specialising in the design of small houses.

A house in Marienbad designed by him in c.1929 is illustrated in 'A different world: émigré architects in Britain 1928-1958' by Charlotte Benton (London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1995 p.165); and a weekend house near Vienna designed by him in 1934 is discussed in 'Baumeister' January 1935 (pp.25-29). Gross also designed several pieces of furniture.

In August 1938 Gross emigrated to the UK where he worked initially for a firm of interior designers and later for Berkertex. Gross was not interned following the outbreak of World War Two, however, his architecture and design activities were suspended.

Between 1941 and 1947 he taught art at Bedford School in Bedford. In 1947 he resumed his architectural practice. He also began lecturing at Hammersmith School of Architecture in Hammersmith, London.

From the 1940s onwards Gross also designed furniture, interiors, exhibition and displays, and worked as a painter. He constructed a two-tiered pavilion for the Brush Aboe Group of Associated British Engineering Companies for the Marine & Engineering Exhibition at Olympia in London in 1954; an animated foam rubber seal which balanced a new Hillman Mix engine for the Rootes Group's stand at the 1956 International Motor Show in London; created a wall mural for the Fisons Garden Centre in London in c.1957; designed a showroom for Ferranti in Old Street, London; and designed the Marlborough Fine Art Gallery in London.

Gross's work as a painter was discussed and reproduced in the Austrian journals 'Die Graphischen Künste', 'Moderne Welt', 'Die Mutter', 'Die Menorah', 'Das Zelt' during the 1920s and 1930s. His work as an architect, designer and artist appeared in numerous British publications between 1929 and the early 1960s including 'The Studio Yearbook of Decorative Art' (between 1929 and 1957),

'Decoration' (1933), 'Ideal Home' (between 1934-60), 'News Chronicle' (1935), 'Architects Journal' (October, November 1951, May, August September, November 1952), 'Architectural Review' (1952, 1954, 1957), 'Art and Industry' (1958) and 'House and Garden' (1960); and in the Italian publications 'Mercati Negozi' (1959), 'Esposizioni' (1960) and 'L'Arredamento' (1964).

Gross was a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (FSIAD) and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA). He died in London on 18 August 1969

Worked in

UK

Bibliography

Whistler, Catherine. Impressionist and modern: the art collection of Fritz Gross. Oxford, England: Ashmolean Museum, 1990

Benton, Charlotte. A different world: emigre architects in Britain 1928-1958. London: RIBA Heinz Gallery, 1995

Links

- The British Museum <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG29926>
- Jisc Archives Hub. Gross, Fritz: unpublished writings. The Wiener Holocaust Library <https://archiveshub.jisc.ac.uk/search/archives/33b84946-9781-39d2-abe2-19f311a45e82>