

Pepler, Marian 1904 - 1997



Marian Florence Pepler [commonly known as Marian Pepler; also known as Marian Russell] was born in Sanderstead, Surrey, England on 24 August 1904. Her father was the architect and town planner George [later Sir George] Lionel Pepler (1882-1959) and her uncle, Hilary (Harry) Douglas Clark Pepler (1878-1951), was the founder of the Ditchling Press. She studied at Croydon School of Art (1923-24), followed by a year at the Froebel Institute in Roehampton, where she trained to be a teacher. She then entered the Architectural Association School in 1924 in order to study modelmaking but instead switched to the architectural course. While at the AA Pepler met her future husband [Richard Drew \(R.D.\) Russell](#) (1903-1981), brother of the furniture designer Gordon Russell (1892-1980).

She graduated in 1929 in the depth of the Depression. With little opportunity to practice as an architect, she and her then husband, the designer, Eden Minns, moved to Broadway in the Cotswolds, where they obtained work at Gordon Russell Ltd. - Minns joined the company's drawing office and designed furniture, and Pepler was commissioned to design rugs. With little experience in this field, she enrolled on a short course at the London School of Weaving in 1930. She also visited the influential Stockholm Exhibition in 1930 and Exhibition of Swedish Arts and Crafts in London the following year. Pepler subsequently designed carpets and rugs for Edinburgh Weavers, the Wilton Royal Carpet Factory, Alex Morton and Tompkinsons Carpets Ltd. of Kidderminster.

Pepler's textile designs were shown at the exhibition 'British Industrial Art in Relation to the Home' at Dorland Hall, London, in 1933, the Gidea Park 'Modern Homes Exhibition' and 'Exhibition of Midland Industrial Art' in 1934, the Royal Academy's 'Exhibition of British Art in Industry' at Burlington House, London, in

1935, the Royal Institute of British Architects' exhibition 'Everyday Things' held in London in 1936, the Exposition des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne in Paris in 1937, and at the Golden Gate International Exhibition in San Francisco in 1939.

Peper married R. D. Russell in December 1933 and subsequently collaborated with him on architectural and design projects including "Lobden, a house in Colwell, near Malvern, which is discussed in *Modern Small Country*. Edited by Roger Smithells (London: Country Life, 1936 pp. 170-173)

She was elected to the National Register of Industrial Art Designers (NRD) in 1937 and in 1946 she joined the Textiles and Carpets section of the Society of Industrial Artists (SIA). That year she made a rug for the 'Britain Can Make It' exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

In 1948 Pepler designed three kilims for S.J. Rybczyk. In the 1950s Pepler stopped designing carpets and rugs in order to concentrate on industrial and interior design work as a consultant with her husband's firm R.D. Russell & Partners. Pepler was elected an Associate of the Royal Institute of British Architects (ARIBA) in 1932 and a Fellow of the Society of Industrial Artists and Designers (FSIAD) in 1947.

Her address was given as 4 High Point, North Hill, London in 1939; and Wakes Colne Place, near Colchester, Essex in 1950. She died in Eynsham, Oxfordshire on 13 October 1997

Worked in

UK

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Links

- Gordon Russell Design Museum
<https://www.gordonrusselldesignmuseum.org/museum-archive/marian-pepler/>
- Penny Sparke, 'Russell, Richard Drew (1903–1981)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Oxford University Press, 2004 [Subscription service]
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/66040>
- Victoria & Albert Museum <http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O68386/carpet-marian-pepler/>
- Christopher Farr <https://christopherfarr.com/designer/marian-pepler/>
- Gordon Russell Design Museum
<https://www.gordonrusselldesignmuseum.org/uncategorised/marian-pepler-aa->

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• Christopher Farr. Designer: Marian Pepler

<https://christopherfarr.com/designer/marian-pepler/>