

Rosenauer, Michael 1884 - 1971

Michael Rosenauer was born in Wels in Upper Austria on 21 August 1884. [or 21 July 1884 - sources differ] and studied architecture at the Technische Hochschule in Graz and at the Technische Hochschule in Vienna under Karl König and Max von Ferstl. He qualified as an architect and engineer in 1908 and from 1910-29 worked as an independent architect in Vienna. His work during this period included housing estates for the municipality of Vienna; several large private house, e.g. for Richard Strauss at Jacquingasse 8-10 in Vienna (1924) and for Leonard W.B. Smith at Wattmanngasse 44 in Vienna (1923); the auction house Dorotheum in the Erlachstrasse in Vienna (1928-29), and commercial and industrial buildings, e.g. optical factories for Goertz, and the 'Dreamland' film factories and studios on the Höhe Warte.

In 1927 Rosenauer was invited to England to advise London County Council and the Ministry of Health on slum clearance and the design of working-class housing. He subsequently settled in London and became a naturalised British citizen in 1934. In 1928 Rosenauer established an architectural practice in London. His projects in the 1930s included the Malmaison Restaurant in London (1931); Troy Cros Apartments in London (1933-34); Arlington House, a luxury block of flats in Westminster, London (1935-36); the redesign of the interiors of a number of theatres in London, including the Cambridge and the Lyric; the remodelling of Ciro's Club in London; offices and a canteen for the Pressed Steel Company in Cowley, Oxfordshire; a several private houses including a house for the photographer Cecil Beaton in Dorset. I

In addition to his practice in London, Rosenauer had an office Paris. Photographs and plans of a summer villa and a country house by the St. Cloud golf course in Garches, Paris, designed by him are illustrated in 'Decorative Art' 1938 (p.32).

During the 1940s he worked in the USA where he was consulting architect to the Federal Housing Projects. Whilst in America he designed a new air terminal in Manhattan, as well as libraries and community centres. He also wrote for the American architectural magazines 'Pencil Points' and 'Architects' Journal'.

On his return to Britain he designed a number of hotels, such as the Emerald Beach Hotel in Nassau, The Bahamas (1952); the Westbury Hotel in London (1954-55); the Hotel and International Centre at Portman Square, London (1969-

71); the Hotel Sa Filipe in Puerto de la Cruz in Teneriffe, Spain (1966); the Hotel Reina Isabel in Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Spain (1966); and the Inn on the Park Hotel at Park Lane in London (1966-70).

In 1951-53 Rosenauer headed a team that designed the Time & Life Building in London. Considered one of the most important British architectural projects of the 1950s, the building featured interiors designed by Misha Black, Robin Day and Sir Hugh Casson, furniture designed by R.D. Russell and Ernest Race, sculptures by Henry Moore and Geoffrey Clarke, a staircase and light fittings by Robert Y. Goodden, ashtrays designed by Lucie Rie, an abstract mural by Ben Nicholson, and hangings by Edward Bawden.

Other architectural projects by Rosenauer during the postwar years included the Marc Chagal Spiritual Centre in Venice, Italy (unrealised, 1955); Highland Park Apartments in Nassau, The Bahamas (1957); and Chapell's Music Store in New Bond Street, London (1964-66).

Rosenauer was elected a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects (FRIBA) in 1938 and became a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1941. Rosenauer was the author of 'Modern Office Buildings' (London: B.T. Batsford, 1955). He died in London on 11 April 1971.

Worked in

Austria

UK

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Harwood, Elain. Mid-Century Britain: Modern Architecture 1938-1963. London: Batsford, 2021

'Obituary'. Building vol. 220, 23 April 1971 pp. 17, 80

Links

- Az W. Architektenlexikon Wien 1770-1945 [Text in German]

<http://www.architektenlexikon.at/de/516.htm>

- Charlotte Benton, 'Rosenauer, Michael (1884-1971)', Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online [Subscription service]

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/63141>

- London Deco Flats <https://londondecoflats.co.uk/architects/michael-rosenauer/>
- Wikipedia [Text in German] https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Rosenauer