

## **Bernard, Oliver Percy 1881 - 1939**



Oliver Percy Bernard was born in Camberwell, London, England on 8 April 1881. He began his career working in the scenery store of a theatre in Manchester. He later became a scenery painter and in 1901-05 worked in London with the set designer Walter Hann. In 1905 Bernard went to the USA where he worked as a theatre designer with Thomas Ryan and as resident technician at the Boston Opera House. Following his return to Britain, Bernard was resident set designer for the Grand Opera Syndicate at Covent Garden, London and served as a Camouflage Officer in the Royal Engineers during World War One [Note: one source consulted states that Bernard did not return to Britain until after the War]. Following the war he continued to work as a set designer. He designed sets for productions at London's Drury Lane and decorations for the Empire Exhibition in Wembley, 1924-25. Bernard also acted as technical director for the British Pavilion at the Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes in Paris in 1925.

Bernard received no formal training as an architect, nevertheless, he worked on a number of significant architectural projects in the 1930s including interiors for the Strand Palace, Cumberland and Regent Palace hotels in London; 'Corner Houses', restaurants and snack bars for J. Lyons & Co.; and the offices of Bakelite Ltd. Between 1931-33 Bernard was also consultant designer for the tubular steel furniture company Practical Equipment Limited (the name changed to PEL in 1932). Bernard died in London on 15 April 1939.

Worked in  
UK

## Bibliography

Exhibition, architectural and stage decoration by Oliver P. Bernard. London: Abbey Gallery, 1926

Harwood, Elain. Art Deco Britain: Buildings of the Interwar Years. London: Batsford, 2019

Links, J.G. 'Oliver Bernard, the Barbican, and Me'. Thirties Society Journal no.5, 1985 pp.2-7

'Obituary'. The Builder vol. 156, 1939 p. 743

Thirties: British Art and Design before the War. London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1979 [Catalogue of an exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London, 25 October-13 January 1979]

## Links

- Alan Powers, 'Bernard, Oliver Percy (1881–1939)', rev. Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online [Subscription service] <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/37186>
- Wikipedia [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver\\_Percy\\_Bernard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Percy_Bernard)
- The Lusitania Resource <https://www.rmslusitania.info/people/saloon/oliver-bernard/>
- Alan Powers. Bernard, Oliver (Percy). Oxford Grove Art Online. [Subscription service] <https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T008223>