

ART DECO BY THE SEA

9 February – 20 September 2020

Large Print Text

**SAINSBURY
CENTRE**

UEA
University of East Anglia

ART DECO BY THE SEA

GALLERY 1

INTRODUCTION

The term Art Deco, coined in the 1960s, refers to the decorative modern style that spanned the boom of the roaring 1920s and the bust of the Depression-ridden 1930s. It was a style of pleasure and escape, and reflected the plurality of the contemporary world, embracing all forms of design, from art and architecture to fashion and funfairs. The style drew on tradition and yet simultaneously celebrated the mechanised, modern world. Art Deco transformed the British seaside. In a new age of mass tourism, triggered by the right to paid holidays for all, coastal resorts were revitalised and transport networks modernised to meet the needs of holidaymakers. Art Deco hotels, apartment blocks, cinemas and lidos changed the vistas of seafronts, while the style permeated the ephemeral world of seaside fairgrounds, pleasure parks and ice cream parlours. Art Deco, above all, signalled a modernity of leisure and fun. The seaside became a site for innovative modern manufacture, as coastal companies embraced the Art Deco style, producing popular products exported all over the world. Art Deco represented many things for many people, but in celebrating pleasure and escape, it succeeded in establishing a style of mass appeal. A style cut short by the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939.

Tom Purvis (1888-1959) for London and North Eastern Railway
East Coast Joys, No.1-6, 1931
Colour lithograph, printed by Haycock Press, London
On loan from the Science Museum Group

Tom Purvis' *East Coast Joys* represents the height of the Art Deco style in graphics. Each poster can stand alone but linked together they form a dramatic continuous scene. Using a limited number of bold colours and making effective use of areas of white paper, the design has an elegant graphic economy typical of Japanese prints. Purvis' mastery of the poster medium was unsurpassed and he became one of the most influential graphic designers of the period.

Septimus Edwin Scott (1879–1965)
Cleethorpes, 1930s
Bodycolour and pencil
The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

The depiction of outdoor activities became a new subject matter for many painters during the 1930s, and several artists including Septimus Scott became well-known for the work they produced for the railway companies. This image of a woman relaxing on a beach presents the highly decorative and sensual realism that proved popular for advertising images.

FISHERMEN AND VISITORS

For many European nations, the horrors of the First World War forced a profound re-evaluation of national traditions and characteristics, which informed the search for a reassuring and accessible national modern style. This 'return to order' as it was described in France, impacted different disciplines in different ways. In painting, many artists turned to realism, which became the most popular idiom of the inter-war period. Artists working in realist styles dominated the Royal Academy and official art circles. Realism also underpinned commercial art and particularly the promotion of the seaside in advertising. The impulses driving the adoption of realism in painting directly relate to the development of a decorative modernism in design and architecture – what today we call Art Deco. Art Deco encompassed a period of rapid change in Britain. Joseph Southall's painting *Fishermen and Visitors*, with its meticulous depiction of modern holidaymakers alongside traditional fishermen, reflects how the modern world absorbed and reimagined the old.

Joseph Edward Southall (1861–1944)

Fishermen and Visitors, 1931

Watercolour on paper

On loan from the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum,
Bournemouth

Depicting the seaside at Southwold in Suffolk, this painting contrasts holidaymakers, wearing fashionable cloche hats and leisurewear, with local fishermen going about their daily routines. Modernity versus tradition is the theme of the work. The juxtaposition of traditional coastal activities with the amusements of the modern tourist became a familiar trope for much representation of the seaside during the period.

Philip Leslie Moffat Ward (1888–1978)

Near Worbarrow Bay, 1930

Oil on canvas

On loan from the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum,
Bournemouth

A leading figure of the Bournemouth arts scene, Ward's landscapes were self-consciously modern. In this coastal panorama, with its high sea cliffs and dramatic effects of light and cloud shadow, a group of young people in their colourful clothes can be seen walking the coastal path. The bright colour-palette and thick application of paint reveals the influence of post-Impressionism.

C. H. H. Burleigh (1869–1956)

Brighton Front, c.1920

Oil on canvas

Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Charles Burleigh's painting of Brighton seafront depicts the resort on the cusp of transition. The subject matter of crowds promenading along the front illustrates both the popularity of Brighton as one of Britain's most fashionable nineteenth-century resorts and the increasing tourism of the post First World War period. The Edwardian fashions stand in contrast to Southall's modern holidaymakers wearing modish Art Deco styles.

LINK BAY 1

DEPICTING THE SEASIDE

Much landscape painting of the 1920s and '30s presented a country untouched by industrialisation. This celebration of Britain's pre-mechanised past was a response to the First World War, but also signalled a rising degree of nationalism. The popularity of realism in Britain carried with it a reaction to the internationalism of abstract modern art. For many artists though, lessons learnt from Cubism and post-Impressionism were combined with a reverence for historical styles and subject matters. Avant-garde tendencies were tempered and absorbed, with the aim of creating an appealing and accessible modern style. Historical techniques such as tempera painting underwent a revival, while the genres of landscape, still life and portraiture continued to dominate at the Royal Academy. Many of the artists presented here trained at either the Slade School of Fine Art, the Royal Academy Schools or the Royal College of Art, which promoted representational painting.

James Walker Tucker (1898–1972)

An Idle Chat, 1936

Tempera on gesso panel

Museum of Gloucester and Gloucester City Council

James Tucker was born in Wallsend, Northumberland. He studied at Armstrong College, Newcastle, and then at the Royal College of Art from 1922 until 1927. Tucker developed a meticulous technique using tempera. He became Head of Drawing and Painting at Gloucester College of Art from 1931 and many of his paintings depict Gloucestershire and the West Country. This painting may be a scene on the River Severn.

James Walker Tucker (1898–1972)

Gathering Shell Fish, St Servan, France, c.1932

Tempera on panel

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

Richard Ernst Eurich (1903–1992)

Lyme Regis, 1930

Oil on canvas

Manchester Art Gallery Dr Jane Walker bequest

Richard Ernst Eurich (1903–1992)

Round the Point, 1931

Oil on canvas

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

Richard Eurich attended Bradford School of Arts and Crafts, before going to the Slade where he studied under Henry Tonks. Influenced by the artist Christopher Wood, he developed a unique approach, which often employed a naïve simplicity. This scene of the Sussex coast shows an ocean liner with a traditional sailing ship, contrasting the modern world with the old, a familiar juxtaposition in this period.

Edward Alexander Wadsworth (1889–1949)

Marine Set, 1936

Tempera on panel

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

Wadsworth had been associated with the radical Vorticist movement but, following the First World War, he turned to painting still lifes in tempera. His images, with their precise depiction of marine objects and strange incongruity, were deeply influenced by European Surrealism. Wadsworth produced marine still life murals for the interior of the De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea and the RMS Queen Mary.

Image Caption: Edward Wadsworth, mural for the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, 1935. De La Warr Pavilion

Harry Rutherford (1903–1985)

Penzance, 1930

Oil on millboard

Manchester Art Gallery. Purchased from the artist in 1930

Rutherford studied at Manchester School of Art and in 1925 was the first student to enrol in Walter Sickert's new art school in Manchester. His sunlit view of Penzance reveals an engagement with realism that was different from other Northern School painters, including L.S. Lowry, whose principal interest was the industrial landscapes of the north.

Dod Procter (1892–1972)

Early Morning, Newlyn, 1926

Oil on canvas

City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection

Doris Shaw (Dod) studied in Newlyn from 1907 to 1910, where she met and married Ernest Procter. From 1910 to 1911 they studied at the Académie Colarossi in Paris and were greatly influenced by post-Impressionism and the work of Paul Cézanne. This painting, with its flat areas of bright colour and its adoption of simplified shapes and planes, relates to Cézanne's interrogation of structure and form.

Ernest Procter (1886–1935)

All the Fun of the Fair, c.1927

Oil on panel

Worthing Museum & Art Gallery

Depicting a travelling funfair at Newlyn, Procter reveals his interest in Dutch genre painting. Pieter Bruegel's detailed depictions of peasant lives and village scenes in sixteenth-century Holland provided a model for Procter and other Newlyn School artists, who aimed to observe the everyday life of their rural community. Procter captures the incidental detail of the traditional village funfair.

Ernest Procter (1886–1935)
Penlee Point, 1926-7
Oil on panel
UK Government Art Collection

Following the traditions of Impressionism, this work explores the effects of light and colour on the coastal landscape. Dod and Ernest Procter frequently painted *en plein air*, depicting changing light and atmosphere in the Cornish landscape and villages.

LINK BAY 2

Thomas Martine Ronaldson (1881–1942)
Summer, 1928
Oil on canvas
Manchester Art Gallery. Purchased from the artist in 1929

For the Scottish portrait painter Ronaldson, the elegant depiction of a young woman swimmer, wearing a stylish bathing suit and beach cape, epitomised modern youth and the preoccupation with health and fitness. Ronaldson's popularity was indicative of the growing demand for portraits in a realist style.

Robert Duckworth Greenham (1906–1976)

On the Beach, 1934

Oil on canvas

The Ingram Collection of Modern British Art

Greenham's crowded beach scene portrays the new age of mass tourism witnessed on Britain's coasts. A working girl, perhaps on her day off, joins other young women at leisure, most probably on the Suffolk shore. His landscapes are often characterised by strong outlines, simplified forms and areas of flat colour. They show the influence of post-Impressionism and here particularly that of the French painter Marie Laurencin.

James Walker Tucker (1898–1972)

Hiking, 1936

Tempera on panel

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

The democratic expansion of leisure pursuits was highlighted through hiking. Walking clubs had existed since the 1880s but, partly as the result of the political struggle to gain access to private land, the Ramblers' Association was founded in 1935. Tucker shows a group of women walking in the Cotswolds, wearing the latest hiking fashions. Executed in the tempera technique, it presents independent modern young women enjoying the countryside.

LINK BAY 3

TRAVELLING TO THE SEA

The inter-war period witnessed major changes in public transport, brought about by technological advances and the development of leisure tourism. Electrified commuter railways, airports, motor coach services and a new generation of trams and coastal pleasure steamers offered new travel opportunities and experiences. All of these modes of transport embraced Art Deco styling as a means of signalling their modernity, comfort and efficiency. In 1923, Britain's struggling private railway companies were restructured into four bigger and financially resilient organisations. These were the London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS), London and North Eastern Railway (LNER), Southern Railway (SR) and Great Western Railway (GWR). All four served seaside resorts and embraced Art Deco in their publicity and styling. Motor coaches offered cheap travel to the coast. Coach design had advanced greatly from the canvas-roofed 'charabancs' of the Edwardian era. Modern fully enclosed coaches provided greater levels of comfort and incorporated the Art Deco style in their interior and exterior detailing. Coachbuilding became a major coastal industry with H.V. Burlington Ltd in Blackpool, Thomas Harrington Ltd in Brighton and Plaxton Ltd in Scarborough. Motorcar ownership also grew rapidly through the period, with more than one million registrations by 1933, making the coast more accessible as a leisure destination for the middle classes.

Leonard Campbell Taylor (1874–1969)

Restaurant Car, c.1935

Oil on canvas

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Taylor's elegant and detailed realist paintings, with their dramatic use of light, were sought-after for advertising. He attended the Ruskin School of Drawing in Oxford, followed by the Royal Academy Schools, and became one of the most successful artists of the period. This work was commissioned by the LMS to promote travel by train. At the time, Taylor's style was compared with that of the Dutch artist Jan Vermeer.

Tom Purvis (1888–1959) for London and North Eastern
Railway

The Four Streamliners, 1937

Colour lithograph, printed by Jarrold & Sons Ltd, Norwich and
London

On loan from the Science Museum Group

The wedge-shaped streamlining on the A4 class locomotives was inspired by the desire for ever increasing speed and technological advancement. In the mid-1930s, the A4's creator Nigel Gresley had seen developments in European train design and, recognising the appeal of streamlining, introduced an aerodynamic design to LNER. The A4 design was refined with the wind tunnel facilities at the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) at Teddington.

Eustace Pain Elliott Nash (1886–1969)

Bus Interior Scene, 1930

Watercolour on paper

On loan from the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum,
Bournemouth

DISPLAY CASE

Rail timetable, Skegness, 1938

Printed paper

Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission
of Bourne Leisure

Butlin's Holiday Camp postcard, c.1936

Postcard

Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission
of Bourne Leisure

This postcard features a women's works outing in front of their
coaches at Butlin's in Skegness.

The new inter-war generation of coaches were particularly
appealing to female groups, offering comfortable and affordable
bespoke travel.

Brochure for Barnards Ltd of Norwich, Coachworks, 1948
Printed paper
Private Collection

Established in Norwich in 1826, the ironwork and fencing company Barnards Ltd moved into coach building after the Second World War. Between 1948 and 1950 Barnards handmade over one hundred coach bodies. Like many coachbuilders they embraced Art Deco for the design. Decorative aluminium or chrome trim was frequently applied to the sides and around the wheel arches, demarcating two-tone paint schemes.

IMAGE CAPTION: F.W Plaxton coach model K3, with a Bedford WTB chassis, 1938. The Bus Archive.

IMAGE CAPTION: F.W Plaxton coach interior, 1930s. Bruce Peter.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS

Harry Hudson Rodmell (1896–1984) for General Steam Navigation Company
Day Cruises to the Sea – Royal Eagle, c.1935
Colour lithograph
P&O Heritage Collection

Popular day pleasure cruises ran from many coastal resorts and several new vessels incorporated Art Deco styling and decoration. For the General Steam Navigation Company's Thames pleasure fleet, the paddle steamers *Crested Eagle* of 1925 and the *Royal Eagle* of 1932 included large saloons filled with rattan chairs and potted plants evocative of winter gardens. The *Royal Eagle* was requisitioned in September 1939 to aid the evacuation of children from Gravesend and Tilbury to Felixstowe, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

Charles Dominique Fouqueray (1869–1956) for Shell
See *Britain First – On Shell, Ben Lomond*, 1925
Colour lithograph
Pullman Gallery, London

Motorcars increasingly came within the financial reach of many middle-class families and had a dramatic impact on holidaymaking. For coastal towns within easy reach of big metropolitan centres, day-trips by coach, car and train made up a substantial part of the economy. Companies such as Shell did much to promote the new car culture, employing leading artists to create appealing images. Here, fashionably dressed visitors picnic beside their glamorous cars.

LINK BAY 3 WINDOW

Model of *Silver Link* steam locomotive, 1935
Scale 1/12, LNER A4 class 4-6-2 No.2509
Metal
On loan from the Science Museum Group

By the 1930s the railways were facing competition from travel by road and air. To compete, services had to become faster, more reliable and comfortable. LNER responded with the introduction of the *Silver Jubilee* streamlined trains. Marking King George V's Jubilee, the first service was hauled by No. 2509 *Silver Link* on the 1st October 1935. The service was a great success, cutting the travel time between Kings Cross and Newcastle down to four hours.

Frank Newbould (1887–1951) for London and North Eastern Railway

Silver Jubilee, 1935

Colour lithograph, printed by The Baynard Press, London

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Frank Newbould, Tom Purvis and several other distinguished designers, were contracted to work exclusively for LNER. They created a stylish, modern identity for the company and in 1929 LNER adopted the new sans-serif font, Gill Sans, designed by artist Eric Gill. Newbould's poster for the *Silver Jubilee* uses metallic silver in the printing process to striking effect.

GALLERY 2

DESIGNING THE SEASIDE

The British seaside, always a site for novel experiment, adopted the Art Deco style for many new architectural projects. Coastal towns were modernised and new resorts established to accommodate the growing number of visitors. Seafronts were redesigned to feature new public amenities such as public gardens, promenades and lidos. Prestigious projects such as The Midland Hotel in Morecambe, and the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea, were accompanied by a proliferation of Art Deco villas that sprang up around the coast. New sea-facing apartment blocks were often evocative of ocean liner design and reflected new ways of living. The Art Deco style shaped the interior design of many new public spaces on the coast. Hotel and cinema interiors reflected the fashion for decorative metalwork, veneered wood, low upholstered seating furniture, and abstract carpet and textile patterns. Cane furniture continued to be popular, while tubular steel and plywood were seen as appropriate new materials for seaside leisure environments - practical, hygienic and symbolic of modernity. Companies like Dryad Ltd, W. Lusty and Sons, Cox and Co. and Practical Equipment Ltd (PEL) supplied furniture for hotels, public winter gardens, holiday camps, cafés, bars and private houses around the country.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS (YELLOW WALL)

Gerald Lacoste (b.1908)

House, Hamilton Road, Hunstanton, the garden front,
photograph by Sydney W Newbery, 1935

Photograph

Architectural Press Archive / RIBA Collections

Kenneth Dalgleish (1887–1964) and Roger K Pullen (d.1996)

Marine Court, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, perspective

by Raymond Myerscough-Walker, 1935

Watercolour on paper

RIBA Collections

Stylish sea-facing serviced apartment blocks were built on the south coast in the 1930s for commuters taking advantage of faster, more regular train services to London. Residents of Embassy Court in Brighton and Marine Court in St. Leonards-on-Sea lived in suites that echoed the modern design of ocean liners. The east end balconies of Marine Court had the same distinctive double-curvature as the recently introduced Cunard transatlantic liner RMS *Queen Mary*.

Julian Leathart (1891–1967)

Dreamland Cinema, Margate, photograph by Arthur George,
1934

Silver gelatin print

RIBA Collections

Julian Leathart's Dreamland entertainment complex transformed the seafront at Margate when it opened in 1935, in front of the existing Dreamland amusement park. Housing a cinema, restaurant and other attractions, the modern aesthetic of Leathart's building had been inspired by German architects like Erich Mendelsohn. Distinctive architectural features and signage were outlined in neon and the extensively glazed exterior provided restaurant diners with sweeping views of Margate Bay.

Harry William Weedon (1887–1970)

Odeon cinema, Botolph Street, Norwich, photograph by John
Maltby, 1938

Photograph

John Maltby / RIBA Collections

The curved horizontal lines and neon outlining used in the new Dreamland complex in Margate were copied by Britain's major cinema chains in the late 1930s. The rapidly expanding Odeon circuit commissioned bold cinema buildings in Britain's major seaside resorts which were carefully branded to establish a uniform Odeon style.

IMAGE CAPTION: Thomas Cecil Howitt, Odeon Cinema,
Weston-Super-Mare, 1930s. Bruce Peter.

Joseph Emberton (1889–1956)
Unexecuted design for Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino,
perspective by Cyril Farey, 1936
Watercolour on paper
RIBA Collections

Joseph Emberton (1889–1956)
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Fun House, 1934
Photograph
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

The Fun House was Joseph Emberton's first major building for Blackpool Pleasure Beach and signalled a period of significant investment in the amusement industry in Britain. Emberton collaborated with the American roller-coaster engineer Charles Paige to create a series of innovative interior mechanisms and attractions for the Fun House.

Joseph Emberton (1889–1956)
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino, rear elevation, 1939
Photograph
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Joseph Emberton's striking Casino building symbolised the dynamic new identity of Blackpool Pleasure Beach. Emberton had experimented with different designs before settling on a glazed circular building with spiral staircases. The Casino opened in 1939 and housed cafés, bars and the luxurious new Savarin restaurant, which had air conditioning and automatic doors. Emberton's building echoed the architecture of the De La Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea, which had opened in 1935.

IMAGE CAPTION: Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino, front elevation, 1939. Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

Murals for Blackpool Pleasure Beach Crèche, painted by
Margaret Blundell, 1937 and 1938
Photographs
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Joseph Emberton invited artists to decorate his Blackpool Pleasure Beach buildings with whimsical murals. The illustrator Margaret Blundell (b.1907) created mural designs for the exterior of Emberton's Fun House, along with many other Pleasure Beach buildings, including the interior of the crèche shown here.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Design for Frinton Park Estate, Frinton-on-Sea, perspective by
John Dean Monroe Harvey, 1934

Gouache and pastel on paper

RIBA Collections

Oliver Hill proposed an ambitious urban plan for a new private housing estate at Frinton-on-Sea in Essex, in partnership with the South Coast Property Investment Company. Hill's plan included designs for a luxury hotel and seafront bathing huts. The villas that he proposed were typical of the period, with sweeping streamlined balconies, reminiscent of ocean liners. Although some houses were built, the difficult economic climate led to the developer's bankruptcy and the scheme was abandoned.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Unexecuted design for Frinton Hotel, Frinton-on-Sea, 1934

Ink on transparent paper with graphite underdrawing

RIBA Collections

YELLOW PLINTH

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

33 Warley Way, Frinton-on-Sea, exterior and living room, 1937

Photographs in album

RIBA Collections

Oliver Hill furnished his houses at Frinton-on-Sea with the latest designs, including abstract-patterned carpets by Marion Dorn and modern ergonomic furniture. This photograph of the living room at 33 Warley Way includes a space-saving folding table, designed by Makers of Simple Furniture.

Gerald Summers (1899–1967) for Makers of Simple Furniture

Armchair, 1934

Birch plywood

Sainsbury Centre

Designs by Gerald Summers and his company, Makers of Simple Furniture, were selected by Oliver Hill to furnish his Frinton Park Estate promotional show home. Summers' chair design of 1934 was made of a single plywood sheet, cut with four straight lines and press-moulded to create the curve of the chair's legs and arms. This simple, experimental approach to plywood was popular in Britain and Makers of Simple Furniture designs were sold through department stores such as Heal's and Harrods.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS (BLACK WALL)

Poster for London, Midland and Scottish Railway

Midland Hotel, Morecambe, 1933

Colour lithograph backed on linen, printed by Jordison & Co.,
London and Middlesbrough

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Midland Hotel, Morecambe, perspective by John Dean Monroe
Harvey, 1932

Pencil, crayon and watercolour on paper

RIBA Collections

Oliver Hill's sophisticated modern design for the Midland Hotel at Morecambe was one of the most significant coastal building projects of the 1930s. The new hotel was central to LMS Railway's efforts to redevelop Morecambe as a holiday destination for style-conscious middle-class visitors. Completed in 1933, the Midland Hotel's gently curving white polished exterior and innovative interior design scheme caused a sensation.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Midland Hotel, Morecambe, entrance front, photograph by
Sydney W Newbery, 1933

Photoprint

RIBA Collections

Royal Doulton

Tableware, Midland Hotel, Morecambe, mid 1930s

Ceramic

On loan from the Science Museum Group

The sculptor Eric Gill carved two seahorses in Portland stone for the top of the Midland Hotel's central entrance front. Gill's seahorses were adapted by the designer Marion Dorn to create a seahorse motif in mosaic for the hotel lobby floor. The seahorse became a symbol for the Midland Hotel and was used to brand its crockery, menus and letterheads.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Design for the Midland Hotel, Morecambe, second floor plan, 1932

Gel lithograph and coloured crayon on drafting linen

RIBA Collections

The Midland Hotel floor plan was designed to maximise sea views, with extensive sweeping balconies. A central circular tower housed the hotel entrance and a spiral staircase, with views of a large ceiling roundel by Eric Gill depicting Neptune and Triton.

IMAGE CAPTION: Midland Hotel, Morecambe, staircase with Eric Gill, *Neptune and Triton Medallion*, designed 1933, photograph by Bruce Peter.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Design for the Midland Hotel, Morecambe, verdigris entrance doors, 1934

Ink on transparent paper

RIBA Collections

Oliver Hill's geometric design for the Midland Hotel's green copper entrance doors was typical of the fashion for decorative metalwork in Art Deco building projects. Stylised metalwork had featured in the 1925 International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris and by the mid-1930s had become very popular in Britain.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Midland Hotel, Morecambe, the café with the fresco *Morning* by Eric Ravilious, photograph by Sydney W Newbery, 1934

Silver gelatin print

RIBA Collections

The artist Eric Ravilious produced a large mural for the circular tearoom café at the Midland Hotel. A series of dreamlike scenes represented day and night at the seaside. The delicate architecture of the murals created an interplay with the modern tubular steel furniture in the café. Ravilious' striking mural was damaged by damp from the outset and was eventually painted over.

Oliver Hill (1887–1968)

Midland Hotel, Morecambe, corner of the hall with stone relief
by Eric Gill and rug by Marion Dorn, 1933

Photograph, reprinted from original negative

Architectural Press Archive / RIBA Collections

Oliver Hill worked with leading artists and designers on the interior decoration for the Midland Hotel. Eric Gill produced a carved relief panel for the hotel lobby which depicts scenes from Homer's *Odyssey*. The formal style of Gill's modern interpretation was influenced by ancient Assyrian relief sculpture. Marion Dorn designed large circular carpets for the lobby. Executed in beige, brown and red, their dramatic abstract patterns suggested waves hitting the shore.

STEPPED YELLOW PLINTH

Marcel Breuer (1902–1981) for Isokon Furniture Co.

Long Chair, 1936

Birch frame and plywood

Sainsbury Centre

Marcel Breuer's *Long Chair* became one of the most famous plywood designs of the 1930s. It was commissioned by Isokon, a London-based firm established in 1931 by Jack Pritchard. The company worked with leading designers and fuelled the fashion for plywood in Britain. Breuer was influenced by Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto, whose plywood furniture featured in Britain's stylish new coastal resorts.

Alvar Aalto (1898–1976)

Armchair, 1932

Birch frame and plywood

Sainsbury Centre

The De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea, designed by Serge Chermayeff and Erich Mendelsohn, integrated modern art and design within its interiors. Aalto's 1932 chair designed for the veranda of the Paimio Sanatorium in Finland, was selected as an appropriate design for the open-plan spaces of the Pavilion. The seat and back of the chair are formed from a thin sheet of wood, and its light-weight design meant it could be used indoors and out. The chairs at Bexhill were coloured vermilion and pale blue.

IMAGE CAPTION: Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff, De la Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, staircase with Alvar Aalto chairs. Photograph by Bridget Smith, 2011. De la Warr Pavilion.

Alvar Aalto (1898–1976) for Oy Huonekalu-ja

Rakennustyötehdas Oy

Paimio lounge chair, 1930

Plywood

Sainsbury Centre

Like many of Aalto's furniture designs, this chair was conceived for the tuberculosis sanatorium in Paimio, Finland. This model was designed for the sanatorium lounge and the angle of the chair back was intended to help sitters breathe more easily. The seaside had historically been a place of convalescence and Aalto's designs for the Paimio Sanatorium were considered well suited to the new coastal building projects in Britain.

Alvar Aalto (1898–1976)
Armchair, 1933
Birch frame and upholstery
Sainsbury Centre

This comfortable armchair, with its upholstered seat, was used at Ramsgate airport, which was one of the most architecturally striking of all the new airports built in the 1930s. David Pleydell-Bouverie designed the Ramsgate terminal building in the shape of a giant wing. The Club Lounge, Club Restaurant and Cocktail Bar were furnished with Aalto's chairs.

IMAGE CAPTION: David Pleydell-Bouverie, Municipal Airport, Ramsgate, exterior and Club Lounge, 1937. Dell & Wainwright / RIBA Collections

Dryad Ltd
Sleepy Hollow armchair, 1920
Bentwood frame and Palembang brown cane
Geoff and Johanna Bowers

Dryad Ltd manufactured cane furniture in Britain in the 1920s, selling designs like the *Sleepy Hollow* in large quantities to seaside hotels, restaurants and cafés. Founded in Leicester in 1907 by Harry Peach, who became a leading member of the Design & Industries Association, the company aimed to improve the quality of design and manufacture in British cane furniture. Dryad Ltd produced a vast range of products from tables and chairs to baskets and trays.

W. Lusty & Sons
Table, 1930s
Lloyd Loom
Private Collection

In 1920, W. Lusty & Sons acquired the British rights for the production of Lloyd Loom fabric. Lloyd Loom was a process developed and patented in 1917 in the USA that used paper twisted around wire. The resultant threads were woven into a sturdy fabric. Lloyd Loom became extremely popular in Britain and replaced cane, which was more expensive and less durable. From the 1930s, Lusty's products were produced in vast quantities in a range of stylish colours.

IMAGE CAPTION: The Lounge, Butlin's Holiday Camp, Clacton-on-Sea, 1938. Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission of Bourne Leisure.

CENTRAL BLACK STEPPED PLINTH (FACING GALLERY 2 ENTRANCE)

Serge Chermayeff (1900-1986) and Waring & Gillow Ltd
Sideboard, 1928–1929
Wood and upholstery
Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

In 1928 Waring & Gillow established a Department of Modern Art, led by the Russian émigré architect Serge Chermayeff. His architectural furniture designs often employed large areas of plain veneered wood, rather than the elaborate decorative techniques associated with French Art Deco. This more austere and restrained approach to Art Deco appealed to the British market.

Attributed to Paul Follot (1877-1941) and Waring & Gillow Ltd
Pair of armchairs, c.1933
Beech wood and upholstery
Private Collection

The progressive English furniture company Waring & Gillow Ltd appointed the French designer Paul Follot to their Paris office. Follot was instrumental in the early development of Art Deco, which first appeared on the international stage at the Paris International Exhibition of 1925. The design of these low ‘tub’ chairs, with their modern floral carved-gilt decoration, is typical of the early French Art deco style. Designs like these were used in hotel lobbies and interiors.

Alan Henry Adams (1892–1988) for Adamsez Ltd.

Figure Group, 1927

Stoneware

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

Many ceramic companies developed wares in the Art Deco style and animal subjects were particularly popular. Moses J Adams began to make Adamesk art wares in 1904 at his pottery in Scotswood, Newcastle. Alan, his son, continued and became Director in 1921. The firm later changed its name to Adamsez Ltd.

Max Le Verrier (1891– 1973)

Clarté, 1928

Bronze, glass and marble

Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Max Le Verrier's floor lamp shows an elegant, strong female form, with fashionable cropped hair. The original design was based on three different life models. The stylised features of Le Verrier's popular figures were widely copied and helped to shape a new ideal of the female body.

Byron Eric Dawson (1896–1968)

Dawn, 1927

Oil on canvas

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

The use of highly stylised, elongated figures and references to classical mythology were typical of French Art Deco style.

Byron Eric Dawson's painting *Dawn* reflects this influence. The decorative composition depicts the sun god Apollo and the goddess Aurora bringing in the dawn and banishing the night.

The muted pinks and beiges were extremely fashionable colours of the period.

Attributed to Royal Wilton Carpets Ltd.

Carpet, c.1930

Wool on Jute warp

Private Collection

Carpets with abstract geometric patterns became fashionable during the 1930s and replaced the floral designs popular in the 1920s. The American born Marion Dorn produced abstract patterns for many prestigious interiors and became the most sought-after carpet and textile designer of the 1930s. Like this carpet with its typical 1930s colour scheme, Dorn's designs were most often geometric patterns held within a plain ground.

CENTRAL BLACK STEPPED PLINTH (FACING GALLERY 2 EXIT)

Glyn Warren Philpot (1884–1937)

Ascending Angel, 1929

Oil on canvas

The Ingram Collection of Modern British Art

With its use of bright colour and strong diagonal composition, *Ascending Angel* has a highly decorative quality. Philpot studied at the Académie Julian in Paris and was influenced by contemporary currents in international modern art, including the work of Picasso and the Neue Sachlichkeit. When the work was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1932 it was criticised and described as being 'unwisely bizarre'.

Oliver Percy Bernard (1881-1938) for PEL

SP7 easy chair, 1932–3

Tubular steel and Rexine

Michael Wright and Dania Herrera

Oliver P Bernard's *SP7* design for PEL responded to the growing demand for easy chairs and with its deep sprung seat reflected a greater concern with comfort and luxury. Bernard was a leading architect working in the Art Deco style and was consultant artistic director to J. Lyons & Co. His design projects included the Strand Palace Hotel and the Cumberland Hotel in London and the Supermarine factory in Southampton.

Oliver Percy Bernard (1881-1938) for PEL

SP2 chair, 1930-1

Tubular steel and Rexine

Michael Wright and Dania Herrera

Practical Equipment Ltd (PEL) worked with architects and designers including Oliver Bernard, Wells Coates and Serge Chermayeff to mass produce stylish tubular steel furniture in the 1930s. Established in 1931, PEL built on the success of tubular steel designs produced by Thonet in Vienna. Seen as structurally efficient, modern and hygienic, PEL furniture featured in high-end interiors for new coastal developments like the De La Warr Pavilion in Bexhill-on-Sea and Embassy Court in Brighton. It was also used at Butlin's holiday camps and in many public buildings.

Christian Barman (1898–1980) for HMV (His Masters Voice)

Room Heater, designed 1934, manufactured 1938

Metal

Sainsbury Centre

New types of products, like this convector heater, provided opportunities for experimenting with modern treatments. This design with its four tiers deflecting warm air down and out, created a decorative effect with its curvilinear, streamlined form and stylish cream enamel finish. It also came in reflective chrome.

Table from Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino restaurant, late 1930s

Tubular steel and glass

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Serge Chermayeff (1900–1986) for Cox & Co.

M52 armchair, c.1932

Tubular steel and Rexine

Sainsbury Centre

The *M52* armchair was designed by Serge Chermayeff for the BBC's new headquarters in London, Broadcasting House. It was produced by Cox & Co. who, together with PEL, dominated the market for tubular steel furniture in Britain. Chermayeff's design, with its elegant flared arms, was later copied and simplified for a range of chairs produced by PEL and used in Butlin's holiday camps.

IMAGE CAPTION: The Cocktail Bar, Butlin's Holiday Camp, Clacton-on-Sea, 1938. Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission of Bourne Leisure.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS (YELLOW / WHITE WALLS)

Bruno Pollak (1902–1985) for PEL
RP6 stacking chair, 1931-1932
Steel and canvas
Sainsbury Centre

IMAGE CAPTION: Lecture Hall, De la Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea, 1935. Bexhill Museum.

Bruno Pollak (1902–1985) for PEL
RP7 stacking chair, 1931–1932
Tubular steel
Michael Wright and Dania Herrera

Gluck (1895–1978)
The Devil's Altar, 1932
Oil on canvas
Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Hannah Gluckstein – Gluck, as she chose to be known - used still life to develop a symbolic language. Heir to the wealthy J. Lyons & Co. family, she moved to Lamorna in Cornwall. In 1932 she met the society florist Constance Spry, who became her lover. The white Brugmansia plant, sometimes called an angel's trumpet, was said to be Spry's favourite flower and was associated with love, death and delirium. Gluck's distinctive three-tier frame was designed to match the architecture of the room.

SEASIDE INDUSTRIES

Some of Britain's most successful design manufactories were located by or near the sea, and were producing striking contemporary products that were exported around the world. Their coastal locations arose for a variety of reasons, including access to natural resources, deep-water ports and inexpensive land and labour. For the Carter companies, the topography of Poole in Dorset, with its red-clay deposits in close proximity to the town and harbour, determined the location of their ceramics and tile manufactory in the nineteenth century. Poole pottery became emblematic of the Art Deco style. After the First World War, new industries such as electronics, machine and transport manufacturing, were often located by the sea and replaced traditional forms of seaside employment such as fishing and boat-building. One of the most successful electronics companies of the period, EKCO Radio, was established at Southend-on-Sea and became a major regional employer. Coastal locations also appealed for romantic and idealistic reasons. For Cryséde Silks, the artistic community at Newlyn in Cornwall provided the inspiration and a skilled workforce for a new approach to textile manufacture, which combined hand-craft skills with factory production. The coasts of Britain proved a fertile space where modern approaches to design and manufacture reinvigorated existing industries and generated innovative commercial concepts and products.

WALL CASE (LEFT SIDE)

EKCO

EKCO became one of the most innovative electronics manufacturers in the world in the 1930s. Established by E.K Cole in his hometown of Southend-on-Sea in 1926, the company combined new technology with stylish design. EKCO popularised the use of moulded Bakelite plastic to house their radios, replacing wood. The company employed leading designers Serge Chermayeff and Wells Coates to design the cabinets, which were mass produced in new local factories. Coates' circular radios became one of EKCO's most celebrated designs.

CENTRE

Wells Coates (1895–1958) for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO Model AD65, designed 1932, produced 1934
Chrome and Bakelite case and wooden stand
Private Collection

Wells Coates' circular design fully exploited the advantages of moulded plastic. The AD65 broke with the convention of Bakelite emulating wood. Coates's clever use of geometry and vertical lines reflected the wider fashion for abstract forms. The circular design was followed by four variations. EKCO also produced wooden stands for the sets, so that they could feature prominently within a room.

IMAGE CAPTION: The Bakelite moulded case of the AD65 radio coming off the production line. EKCO factory, Priory Crescent, Southend-on-Sea, 1930s. Southend Museums Service

TOP LEFT

J.K. White for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO *All Electric Consolette* Model RS3, 1931
Celluloid, copper grille and Bakelite case
Private Collection

The RS3 was the first EKCO radio to use Bakelite for the case and to have station names marked on the dial. Designed in-house, the architectural style of the cabinet was known as an 'Odeon front'. The façade of the case was reminiscent of the stepped architecture of Art Deco buildings. The copper speaker-grille carries the symbol of the company, the willow tree, evocative of the Essex landscape.

MIDDLE LEFT

Serge Chermayeff (1900-1986) for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO Model AC74, 1933
Celluloid, silk cloth and Bakelite case
Private Collection

EKCO was the first British company to establish a Bakelite press. The presses came from Germany, and their arrival signalled the beginning of the plastics industry in the UK. Factory production expanded rapidly, with conveyor-belt assembly-line methods introduced from the car industry at Dagenham. Ten lines could run simultaneously and produce several different products at the same time.

BOTTOM LEFT

E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO Model AD36, 1935
Chrome and Bakelite case
Private Collection

TOP RIGHT

Jesse Collins for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO *All Electric* Model AC97, 1936
Bakelite case
Private Collection.

EKCO continued to produce Art Deco-styled radios throughout the 1930s, such as the AC97, with its tall skyscraper form and three horizontal side-mouldings. The 'mystic eye' at the top of the set was a cathode-ray display that glowed green when a station was tuned in.

MIDDLE RIGHT

Wells Coates (1895–1958) for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO AD76, c.1935
Bakelite case
John Clark Collection

BOTTOM RIGHT

Wells Coates (1895–1958) for E.K. Cole Ltd.
EKCO Model AC85, 1934
Chrome and Bakelite case
Private Collection

WALL CASE (CENTRAL)

POOLE POTTERY

The Carter companies led the production of domestic and industrial ceramics in the Art Deco style. Carter & Co., established in Poole in 1873, produced tiles and architectural wares for prestigious Art Deco building projects, such as the Hoover and Firestone factories in London. They also worked with companies like W.H. Smith to produce decorative signage for their shops. In 1921, the new company Carter, Stabler & Adams (CSA) was launched, with a firm focus on fashionable contemporary design. Led by the artists John Adams, Truda Adams and Harold Stabler, CSA produced distinctive hand-painted pottery, often with bold floral patterns. Their popular modern wares were sold through progressive department stores like Heal's and Liberty's.

Truda Adams (1890–1958) (design) and Gertie Warren (decoration) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.
Persian deer pattern plate, 1924-7
Glazed earthenware
Private Collection

Olive Bourne (design) and Nellie Bishton (b.1909) (decoration) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.
Young woman pattern plate 909/GZ, 1930s (designed), 1944-1949 (produced)
Glazed earthenware
John Clark Collection

Anne Hatchard (1905-1973) (decoration) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.

Floral pattern vase 947/LJ, c.1930

Glazed earthenware

John Clark Collection

John Adams (1882–1953) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.

Pair of three-arm candlesticks, c. 1931

Glazed earthenware

Private Collection

The grape and vine motifs used by John Adams in this candlestick design were evocative of the decorative trends seen at the 1925 Paris Exhibition. The stylish shagreen glaze was extremely popular in the period and was also used for the Carter designs produced for the RMS *Queen Mary* and *Queen Elizabeth* ocean liners.

Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.

Floral pattern vase 442/PI, 1930s

Glazed earthenware

Private Collection

Eileen Prangnell (b.1908) (decoration) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.

Leaping deer pattern vase 599/TZ, c.1935

Glazed earthenware

John Clark Collection

The leaping deer motif on this vase is typical of a fashionable new Art Deco iconography. Decorative animal designs featured widely, appearing on everything from textiles and jewellery, to metalwork and architecture.

Eileen Prangnell (b.1908) (decoration) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.

Blue bird pattern vase 960/HE, 1922-1934

Glazed earthenware

Private Collection

Carter & Co. for W.H. Smith, tile panels with typeface by Eric Gill

Sea Tales, Animal Books and Gardening Books, 1920s

Glazed earthenware

Private Collection

Dora M. Batty (1891-1966) for Carter & Co.
Sheila, tile designed 1921-1925, produced 1930s
Glazed earthenware
Private Collection

Harold Stabler (1872– 1945) for Carter, Stabler and Adams Ltd.
Galleon, 1925
Glazed earthenware
Victoria and Albert Museum

Harold Stabler's *Galleon* was made in a number of sizes and was adopted as the official symbol of Carter & Co. Featuring in exhibitions, catalogues and advertisements, it was widely seen in the 1920s and '30s. The piece was inspired by Admiral Henry Paye, a fifteenth-century local pirate, who became Commander of the Fleet of the Cinque Ports.

WALL CASE (RIGHT SIDE)

CRYSÉDE

Cryséde Ltd produced striking hand-crafted textile designs for fashion and interiors in the 1920s and '30s that owed much to the influence of French Art Deco. Cryséde founder Alec Walker had been introduced to the thriving artistic community of the Newlyn School in Cornwall by his wife, the artist Kay Earle. Walker set up a workshop in Newlyn in 1919 where staff were trained in the entire process of silk production, from the preparation of raw materials through to hand block-printing and finishing. In 1925 the business expanded, establishing new premises in a disused pilchard cellar on the waterfront at St Ives.

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.
Scarf, late 1920s
Printed silk
Target Gallery, London

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.
Penberth Farm textile, designed 1925-33, reproduced 1993
Printed silk
Dr Brenda King, Chair, The Textile Society

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.
Fishes textile, 1920s
Printed silk
Dr Brenda King, Chair, The Textile Society

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.

Exotic textile, 1928

Printed linen

Target Gallery, London

Like many artists associated with Newlyn, Alec Walker was deeply influenced by contemporary developments in French painting and design. In 1923 Walker visited Paris, hopeful of commissioning designs from Raoul Dufy, one of the leading French artists working in textiles. Dufy's interest in modernising the decorative traditions of the eighteenth century for a new age appealed to Walker and inspired him to create his own brightly coloured, painterly designs.

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.

Jacket, c.1928.

Printed linen

Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

Alec Walker (1889–1964) for Cryséde Ltd.

Isles of Scilly jacket, c.1928

Printed linen

Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

Alec Walker's designs for Cryséde often depicted rural or seaside scenes. Many, like this *Isles of Scilly* design, were inspired by the Cornish landscape and infused with a modern European spirit. Walker described his principle as being to 'carry modern feeling, as expressed in modern design, into the fabrics themselves'.

GALLERY 3

AMUSEMENTS, BY DAY AND BY NIGHT

The 1920s and '30s witnessed the advent of the healthy body culture, when sunbathing, swimming and a host of other outdoor activities became fashionable. Pleasure gardens, lidos and golf courses changed the look of seaside resorts, while holiday camps such as Butlin's provided new types of holiday experience. Resorts around Britain were adapted and modernised to create new attractions, and to cope with the growing numbers of tourists. The Holiday with Pay Act of 1938 enshrined in law the right to paid holiday for all. The government-backed programme of lido construction saw the creation of some of Britain's grandest outdoor swimming pools. Most were built in the Art Deco style, with streamlined buildings and diving structures evocative of ocean liner design. Municipal authorities invested in the development of entertainment complexes and winter gardens, which provided amusements by day and night. Art Deco styling also transformed the ephemeral popular culture of seaside circuses, fairgrounds, funfairs and illuminations.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS (LIGHT BLUE WALL)

Edward McKnight Kauffer (1890–1954) for Great Western Railway

Great Western to Cornwall, 1932

Colour lithograph

Victoria and Albert Museum

GWR embarked on an ambitious poster campaign in the early 1930s and commissioned six posters promoting holidays in Devon and Cornwall from Edward McKnight Kauffer, an influential American-born artist and designer. Kauffer was an eclectic borrower of artistic styles, which he skilfully adapted to poster design. This image, with its unusual view from within a boathouse or fisherman's hut, is conventionally representational, but has a distinctly Surrealist flavour.

Kenneth Shoesmith (1890–1939) for London and North Eastern Railway

Lowestoft, 1930

Colour lithograph, printed by Jarrold & Sons Ltd., Norwich and London

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Shoesmith was primarily a painter of marine subjects. Here, he focuses on the red-sailed fishing boats, their masts and rigging depicted in detail and the trawler beyond. Lowestoft, a working fishing port, had grown as a popular resort thanks to its wide sandy beaches and two piers. Towns on the East Anglian coast were served by both LNER and LMS, and this poster was a joint publication. Jarrold & Sons printed many poster designs for the railway companies, notably those promoting east coast resorts. Founded in 1770 in Woodbridge, Suffolk, Jarrold & Sons moved to Norwich in 1823 and became prominent as a printer of local guidebooks and postcards.

Charles Pears (1873–1958) for London and North Eastern Railway

Great Yarmouth & Gorleston-on-Sea, c.1935

Colour lithograph, printed by Jordison & Co. Ltd., London and Middlesbrough

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Laura Knight (1877–1970) for London and North Eastern Railway

The Yorkshire Coast, c.1929

Colour lithograph

Victoria and Albert Museum

Knight's athletic girls pose like figures on an antique frieze, their games frozen in mid-air. This stylisation is quite unlike the *en plein air* naturalism that characterised her many other seaside views painted in both Yorkshire and Cornwall. It is indicative of a wider interest in classicism typical of the 1920s and very much associated with the Art Deco style.

Septimus Edwin Scott (1879–1965) for London and North Eastern Railway

It's Quicker by Rail - The Broads, 1936

Colour lithograph, printed by Waterlow & Sons Ltd., London and Dunstable

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Andrew Johnson (1893–1973) for London and North Eastern Railway

North Berwick - It's Quicker by Rail, 1930s

Bodycolour and pencil on board

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums

Nowell Mary Edwards (1906-1983) for Southern Railway
Southern: Camping Sites in Southern England, 1935
Colour lithograph, printed by McCorquodale, London
On loan from the Science Museum Group

The benefits of spending leisure time camping, rambling and cycling in the British countryside were widely promoted in the 1930s. The playful simplicity of Edwards' poster for Southern Railway was part of a drive to position camping as a healthy, uncomplicated and family-friendly holiday option. By the late 1930s an estimated half-million people in Britain were taking a camping holiday of three days or more.

WALL MOUNTED WORKS (DARK BLUE WALL)

Septimus Edwin Scott (1879–1965) for London, Midland and Scottish Railway
New Brighton and Wallasey, c.1934
Colour lithograph, printed by Waterlow & Sons Ltd., London and Dunstable
On loan from the Science Museum Group

The New Brighton Open Air Bathing Pool attracted more than a million swimmers in 1934 and was Britain's largest new lido. Similar outdoor bathing pools were being built around the country, with bold streamlined architectural features. Rail companies were quick to use these popular modern attractions to promote travel to coastal resorts. Scott's poster for LMS Railway focuses on a striking young woman wearing contemporary swimwear, set against the fashionable Art Deco pool complex at New Brighton.

John Littlejohns (1874–1955) for London and North Eastern Railway

Whitley Bay, c.1929

Colour lithograph, printed by Haycock Press, London

On loan from the Science Museum Group

Ten miles east of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Whitley Bay was a popular resort for visitors from the north-east of England and flourished during the inter-war years. Littlejohns' design, with its bold colours, depicts a female figure posed on the rocks and looking across a crowd of holiday makers swimming and sunbathing. Like many posters of the period, it focusses on the fashionable 'bathing beauty' to promote the resort.

Reginald Edward Higgins (1877–1933) for London and North Eastern Railway

Filey - For the Family, c.1925

Colour lithograph, printed by Vincent Brooks, Day & Sons Ltd., London

On loan from the Science Museum Group

SWIMWEAR

The popularity of swimming and sunbathing at the beach generated a new focus on women's swimwear in the 1920s and '30s. Fitted, more revealing styles of bathing suit developed with the introduction of figure-hugging materials and a greater focus on the body in British culture. New open-air swimming pools were often surrounded by sunbathing terraces and hosted fashion shows and beauty contests. This helped to establish an idealised, swimwear-clad female body as a symbol of the modern seaside resort in Britain.

IMAGE CAPTION: *Portobello Lido*, 1936. Photograph by Valentine.

CENTRAL PLINTH

Bukta
Ladies' orange bathing suit, early 1940s
Woollen mix
Southend Museums Service

Several British companies manufactured swimwear during the period. Founded in 1879 in Stockport, Cheshire, Bukta was a sports brand which produced clothing and equipment for outdoor pursuits such as swimming and camping. This swimsuit is similar in style to the one depicted in the Charles Pears poster for Great Yarmouth & Gorleston-on-Sea shown nearby.

Ladies' black and yellow bathing suit, 1920s
Stretch cotton
Southend Museums Service

Ladies' knitted two-piece bathing suit, 1930s

Wool

Southend Museums Service

Ladies' knitted blue and cream bathing suit, 1920s

Wool

Southend Museums Service

BLACKPOOL

Blackpool was the most popular seaside resort in Britain with over 7 million visitors in 1937. Historically, the town had developed with the influx of factory and mill workers, who took their annual holidays there en masse. Blackpool Council invested heavily in developing the resort's amenities including new promenades, swimming pools and the new attraction of Stanley Park, which opened in 1926. Blackpool frequently featured in British popular culture with films such as *Hindle Wakes* (1927), with its themes of class and sexual transgression, and the Gracie Fields musical, *Sing As We Go* (1934), set in the resort. The inter-war years saw the privately owned Pleasure Beach firmly embedded in Blackpool's tourist economy. From 1933, the park underwent an unparalleled remodelling project. Owner Leonard Thompson brought together leading architects, designers and amusement park engineers to redesign all aspects of the experience, from the buildings and rides, to the marketing materials and costumes. Architect Joseph Emberton developed striking Art Deco buildings, while Tom Purvis, Percy Metcalfe and Edward McKnight Kauffer created a new visual identity for the Pleasure Beach.

Fortunino Matania (1881–1963)
Blackpool, 1937
Oil on canvas
On loan from the Science Museum Group

The Italian-born Matania was commissioned by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company to produce a promotional image for Blackpool. His multi-figure composition and hyper-realist style was deeply influenced by the medium of photography. Matania's modern young women, wearing the latest styles, did much to promote the fashionability of the resort and idea of the healthy body.

DISPLAY CASE (LEFT SIDE)

Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens *Radiating Pleasure to the World* souvenir programme, 1938
Printed paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield Library

Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens booklet, with illustrations by Fortunino Matania, 1937
Printed paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield Library

Winter Gardens Olympia booklet, 1930s
Printed paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield
Library

The new Olympia exhibition hall was part of the modernisation of Blackpool's seafront Winter Gardens in the 1930s. Lavish entertainment venues had been constructed for the Winter Garden complex from the 1870s onwards to service and amuse tourists, whatever the weather. By the 1930s this included a theatre, an opera house, a ballroom and a series of bars, lounges and restaurants.

Blackpool Illuminations souvenir programme and insert, *Happy Days! Magic Nights!* 1929
Printed paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield
Library

The 1930s saw a huge investment in the annual tradition of illuminating Blackpool seafront with a spectacular array of electric lightbulbs from August until November. The extent and complexity of the light displays was significantly expanded, embracing the latest possibilities presented by advances in technology. In 1932 animated scenes were added to the strings of festoon lighting, which had been extended to run for six miles along the seafront.

Lawrence Wright's *On with the Show* at North Pier New Pavilion, Blackpool programme, 1938
Printed paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield
Library

WALL MOUNTED WORKS

Blackpool Pleasure Beach children's ride, 1938

Photograph

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Joseph Emberton (1889–1956)

Blackpool Pleasure Beach Fun House, with Sir Hiram Maxim's
Captive Flying Machines in motion, mid 1930s

Photograph

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

The architect Joseph Emberton led the redesign of Blackpool Pleasure Beach in the 1930s, creating new buildings and rides and remodelling older features in a modern style. This photograph shows a view of Emberton's new Fun House, which opened in 1934. The foreground shows Emberton's updated canopy for Sir Hiram Maxim's Captive Flying Machines, one of the Pleasure Beach's oldest rides.

Percy Metcalfe (1895-1970)

Blackpool Pleasure Beach Noah's Ark, refurbished 1936

Photograph

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Percy Metcalfe (1895-1970)

Three designs for Cubist animals for Blackpool Pleasure Beach
Noah's Ark refurbishment, 1936

Paper

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

During his long career at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, the artist and designer Percy Metcalfe modernised the overall identity of the park. He redesigned iconic attractions including the Noah's Ark ride. Metcalfe's new designs for the sculpted animals demonstrate his ability to convey complex forms through their basic shapes, which gave the ride a new modern aesthetic.

Tom Purvis (1888–1959)

Original logo design for Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino,
1930s

Pencil and ink on paper

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Tom Purvis (1888–1959)

Original design for Blackpool Pleasure Beach Ice Drome
poster, c.1937

Gouache on board

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Tom Purvis shaped a unified, modern visual identity for Blackpool Pleasure Beach with his original designs for their marketing materials, menus and posters. One of his most popular creations was 'Ice Drome Jack' for the newly opened Ice Drome in 1937. Purvis' cartoon character featured in different scenarios and was similar in style to other early animated characters like Felix the Cat and Mickey Mouse.

DISPLAY CASE 2 (RIGHT SIDE)

Tom Purvis (1888–1959)
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino children's menu, 1930s
Printed paper
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Blackpool Pleasure Beach Casino drinks menu, 1939
Printed paper
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Tom Purvis (1888–1959)
Original designs for postcards for Blackpool Pleasure Beach
rides, 1930s
Pencil, paint and ink on card
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Edward McKnight Kaufer (1890-1954)
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Ice Drome leaflet, 1938
Printed paper
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

Tom Purvis (1888–1959)
Blackpool Pleasure Beach Ice Drome programme, 1939
Printed paper
Blackpool Pleasure Beach

CENTRAL PLINTH

GOLF

Golf was one of the most fashionable sports of the 1930s and golf courses became a popular feature of many coastal resorts. British companies produced stylish clothes for golfers keen to parade the latest fashions. The railway companies marketed resorts with posters of well-dressed golfers, promoting a sport that appealed to both men and women. The glamorous golfer Gloria Minoprio (1907-1958) had caused a sensation at the British Ladies Championship in Devon in 1933 by wearing trousers on the golf course for the first time.

IMAGE CAPTION: Gloria Minoprio at the Women's Amateur Championship. Photograph, 1938. Sainsbury Centre

Golf clubs and bag, c.1930
Wood, steel. canvas and leather
Private Collection

Short sleeve sweater, 1930s
Rayon
Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

During the 1920s and '30s knitted sportswear sweaters and skirts became familiar attire for women on the golf course. Loose-fitting, knitted dresses were made popular by fashion designers such as Coco Chanel, who introduced them into sportswear collections.

Jaeger

Sweater, hat and scarf, 1930s

Wool

Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

Traditional knitwear was a staple of the golf course for both men and women. Fair Isle sweaters were popularised by the Prince of Wales, who famously wore them to play golf at St Andrews in the 1920s. British companies like Jaeger produced fashionable knitwear for golf and other outdoor pursuits.

Sleeveless sweater, 1930s

Wool

Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

Golfing print blouse, 1930s

Rayon crepe

Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

This blouse demonstrates the fashionability of golf, with its charming printed pattern of golfers and buttons suggestive of golf balls.

BUILDING THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

The new healthy body culture was born out of the particular social, political and economic forces shaping post-First World War society, particularly for women. The women's emancipation movement finally saw all women over the age of 21 receive the right to vote in 1928, while the nation's health and recreation became important political issues. The Women's League of Health & Beauty typified the mass physical-fitness organisations that emerged not just in Britain, but in many European countries. These groups, and the broader pursuit of outdoor activities, provided the important function of enabling women from all classes to meet, socialise and improve their physical well-being. Mass exercise became a spectacle frequently seen at beaches, holiday camps and the many lidos built in the 1930s.

Women's League of Health & Beauty exercise outfit, with shorts by Umbro, 1930s
Rayon and satin
Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion

Organisations promoting mass physical fitness and group exercise classes emerged in the 1920s and '30s in many European countries as part of a new healthy body culture. Members of the Women's League of Health & Beauty, established in Britain in 1931 by Mary Bagot Stack, wore stylish uniforms with an elegant logo. The outfits were designed to be practical for exercise and to expose as much skin to the open air as possible.

DISPLAY CASE

BUTLIN'S

The fairground showman Billy Butlin (1899-1980) opened his first seaside holiday camp in Skegness in 1936, followed by a second site at Clacton-on-Sea in 1938. Butlin's camps provided a package of communal entertainment and hospitality in large, sea-facing modern buildings. Individual chalets provided sleeping accommodation. Sporting and outdoor activities featured prominently in the dynamic design of their promotional material. Aimed at middle-class families, a Butlin's holiday cost the price of an average week's wage. This appealed to a fast-growing market in Britain, where paid holiday for all became law with the Holiday with Pay Act of 1938.

Brochures for Butlin's Holiday Camp, Skegness, 1936-1938

Printed paper

Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission of Bourne Leisure

Pin badges for Butlin's, 1930s

Enamelled metal

Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission of Bourne Leisure

Grille badge for Butlin's, 1930s

Enamelled metal

Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission of Bourne Leisure

WALL MOUNTED WORK

Edmund Oakdale for London and North Eastern Railway
Butlin's Holiday Camp Skegness, c.1936
Colour lithograph, printed by Waterlow & Sons Ltd., London
and Dunstable
Courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust, by kind permission
of Bourne Leisure

DARK BLUE WALL PLINTH

EVENING WEAR

Nightlife became a focus of post-First World War society and Britain's resorts provided a rich programme of events and entertainment that required elegant evening wear. The straight-seamed flapper dresses of the 1920s, with their rich decoration of sequins, embroidery and beading, were replaced with the figure-hugging, bias-cut designs of the 1930s. The bias-cut was developed by leading French couturiers such as Jeanne Lanvin and Madeleine Vionnet. The dresses worn in seaside resorts like Southend reflect the wider British market for styles that emulated the top French designers. These examples drawn from Southend Museums collection, and worn at the resort, are typical of the fashion for glamorous materials such as silk, satin and velvet and for the floral patterns, which were so distinctive of the 1930s.

Black evening dress, 1930s
Synthetic velvet
Southend Museums Service

Blue evening dress, c.1930
Silk velvet Devore
Southend Museums Service

Black evening dress with shoulder cape, 1925-35
Silk satin
Southend Museums Service

Blue evening dress, c.1931
Satin
Southend Museums Service

Floral patterned evening dress with matching bolero jacket,
c.1935
Crêpe de Chine
Southend Museums Service

Jean Dunand (1877–1942)
Clair de Lune, c.1928
Lacquer on wood
Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove

Dunand was one of the most important designers working in the Art Deco style. He learnt lacquering in 1912 from the Japanese artist Seizo Sugawara, who revitalised the ancient technique. Dunand's works encompassed a great variety of themes, from animal and floral designs, to landscapes and abstract patterns. This magnificent screen, showing a moonlit seascape, was one of a very few he produced on this theme.

Irénée Rochard (1906–1984)

Seagull, c.1930

Bronze

Private Collection

Irénée Rochard specialised in sculptures of animals and particularly birds. This type of 'animalier bronze' became highly fashionable during the period. Sculptors specialising in animals were closely associated with the Art Deco style and included Edouard-Marcel Sandoz and François Pompon. Pompon's *Polar bear* was shown to great acclaim in one the greatest Art Deco interiors of the period, Jacques-Émile Ruhlman's Hôtel du Collectionneur at the Paris Exhibition of 1925.

FAIRGROUNDS

The inter-war period was one of technological transition for the British amusement industry, as new and exciting rides were developed. Electrically driven motors superseded steam power and the pursuit of speed characterised many new rides. Motorbikes replaced the traditional horse on carousels, while new amusements such as the Waltzer and dodgem cars made their appearance. Manufacturers developed innovative themes with all the energy and excitement of the age reflected in their names – the ‘Skid’, the ‘Swirl’ and the ‘Speedway’. Clean lines and bright paintwork captured the feeling for modernity and progress, while Art Deco motifs and imagery replaced the carved baroque decoration of the earlier eras. The Art Deco style, with its eclectic references and flexible decorative language, suited the popular and quick-changing culture of the fairground.

Fairground scene poster, 1930s
Colour lithograph, printed by Willsons Show Printers
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield
Library

Design for Frank Codona's Speedway, 1930s
Pencil on paper
National Fairground and Circus Archive, University of Sheffield
Library

The winged motorbike wheel used in the decoration of Frank Codona's Speedway ride reflects the Art Deco fashion for reimagining elements of ancient Egyptian imagery, in this case the winged solar disc motif. References to Egyptian imagery had become popular in Britain following the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922.

Harry Epworth Allen (1894–1958)

Wall of Death, c.1936

Pencil on tempera

The Laing Art Gallery, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums

Harry Allen depicts the dare-devil fairground attraction of the Wall of Death. A motorbike was driven round a steeply sloping stadium, reaching an almost-horizontal position at the top of the ring. Only the speed kept it in position. Allen uses the traditional technique of tempera, with its bright colours and exacting detail, to capture the excitement of this contemporary fairground event.

Chicken Joe's roundstall, 1930s

Wood, steel and plastic

Dingles Fairground Heritage Centre, Steve Smith

Dodgem, c.1948–1952

Steel with chrome bodywork

Dingles Fairground Heritage Centre, Rick Ward

Dodgems, or bumper cars, as they became known, began to appear in Britain's fairgrounds in the 1920s. Billy Butlin had the first licence to promote the US brand Dodgem in the UK. With their chrome detailing and streamlined 'speed whiskers', Dodgems conveyed a sense of progress and modernity.

Traylens Noah's Ark motorbike, 1930s
Wood, metal and imitation leather
Dingles Fairground Heritage Centre, Michael Smith

The design and decoration of fairground attractions constantly changed in response to new fashions and technological developments in the 1920s and '30s. Motorcycles on 'Speedway' tracks replaced the more traditional use of model animals on fairground rides. The rising sun decorating Chicken Joe's fairground stall front was a popular Art Deco motif.

Cromer 1934 and *Sunny Clacton*,
1934 and 1939
Original format 16mm Dufaycolor and Kodachrome
East Anglian Film Archive

This ten minute film brings together footage from two amateur silent films made in the 1930s. *Cromer 1934* records seaside activities and sailing on the Norfolk Broads. *Sunny Clacton*, filmed in 1939 in Clacton-on-Sea, features beach exercise classes, swimming and a beauty contest at the recently opened Butlin's Holiday Camp.

CURVED CORRIDOR

DOCUMENTING DECO

Students from East Coast College worked with the Sainsbury Centre to research and respond to Great Yarmouth's Art Deco architectural heritage. The students took part in an architecture tour of Clipper Schooner and The Iron Duke, two Art Deco buildings in Great Yarmouth commissioned by Lacons Brewery and designed by Arthur W. Ecclestone in the late 1930s. Artist Genevieve Rudd led an on-location photography workshop, focussing on the key features of Art Deco architecture – streamlining, bold shapes and strong profiles, geometric design and decoration – introducing a contemporary perspective on the regional story of Art Deco architecture.

'Documenting Deco' came about through the collaboration and support of Time and Tide Museum, Creative Collisions, Friends of The Iron Duke, The Ranworth Trust and the staff and students at East Coast College: Ernesta Adomaityte, Esmiralda Antanaviciute, Sian Claxton, Jessica Crocker, Tia Fallon Atkin, Louis Gowing, Liam Green, Jack Harris, Abby Johnson, Louise Lawley, Caitlin Lee, Ellie May Martin, Jack Mellows, Ebony Reeder, Sasha Simms, Shona Small, Robyn Steele.

IMAGE CAPTION: Arthur W. Ecclestone (design), The Iron Duke in the 1930s

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

For more information and to book tickets, visit:
sainsburycentre.ac.uk or ask at gallery reception.

‘MODERNITÉ, SURPRISE, NOUVEAUTÉ’: ART DECO FASHION

Cassie Davies-Strodder

Thursday 27th February 6pm

Doctoral researcher in textiles and fashion at the V&A and Central St. Martins, Cassie DaviesStrodder will guide us through Art Deco fashion, from the boyish look of the 1920s ‘flapper’ to the streamlined silhouette of the 1930s ‘elegante’.

CURATOR’S TALK: ART DECO BY THE SEA

Thursday 5th March 6pm

Join Ghislaine Wood, curator of Art Deco by the Sea, for an engaging lecture introducing the key themes of this exciting exhibition.

SCREEN PRINTING MASTERCLASS WEEKEND WITH PRINT TO THE PEOPLE

Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th March 10.30am–3.30pm

Join us for a screen printing masterclass inspired by the Art Deco by the Sea exhibition, with two tutors from artist-led print studio Print to the People.

The following events were cancelled due to the temporary closure of the Sainsbury Centre:

WHEN THE SUN CAME OUT: SEASIDE ARCHITECTURE BETWEEN THE WARS

Dr Kathryn Ferry

Thursday 26th March 6pm

Architectural historian and seaside specialist Dr Kathryn Ferry looks at how new forms of building responded to new leisure priorities during the 1930s as sunbathing became the latest holiday trend, working people won the right to paid annual leave and Modernism appeared on British promenades.

BY TRAIN TO THE SEA

Paul Atterbury

Thursday 23rd April 6pm

Join British antiques expert Paul Atterbury for a lively evening lecture, exploring how new transport networks opened up the seaside to the modern traveller.

LASTING PLEASURES: ACTIVATING THE LEGACY OF ART DECO BY THE SEA

Friday 5th June 2–5pm

Since the 1970s, the economy of many British seaside towns has been fragile. A few cases stand out, however, in which key restored buildings from the interwar period, such as the Midland Hotel, Morecambe and the De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill, have cemented a glowing image of their respective towns in people's consciousness. The people involved in recovering other historic buildings from this recent past will reveal the struggles and achievements of bringing them back to life.

EXHIBITION ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EXHIBITION CURATOR: Ghislaine Wood

PROJECT CURATORS: Katherine Mager, Monserrat Pis Marcos, Lisa Newby

EXHIBITION DESIGN: Andrés Ros Soto

GRAPHIC DESIGN: Johnson Design

SCENIC PAINTING: Harper Art Services

EXHIBITION LIGHTING: George Sexton Associates

PUBLICITY: Bolton & Quinn

The exhibition is organised by the Sainsbury Centre in partnership with the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle where it runs 17 October 2020 – 1 February 2021.

The exhibition would not be possible without the generosity of the public and private lenders. These include: Beecroft Art Gallery and Southend Museums Service; Bourne Leisure and Butlins Ltd, courtesy of the History of Advertising Trust; Blackpool Pleasure Beach; Geoff and Johanna Bowers; Collection of Cleo and Mark Butterfield: C20 Vintage Fashion; City & County of Swansea: Glynn Vivian Art Gallery Collection; John Clark Collection; Nick Dawe; Dingles Fairground Heritage Centre: Michael Smith, Steve Smith and Rick Ward; East Anglian Film Archive at UEA; Museum of Gloucester and Gloucester City Council; Edgar Harden; Michael Wright and Dania Herrera; The Ingram Collection of Modern British Art; Dr Brenda King; The Laing Art Gallery: Tyne & Wear Archives and

Museums; Manchester Art Gallery; Kneale Metcalf Collection; National Railway Museum and the Science Museum Group; P&O Heritage Collection; Pullman Gallery, London; RIBA; Royal Pavilion & Museums, Brighton & Hove; Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth; The University of Sheffield, National Fairground and Circus Archive; Target Gallery, London; UK Government Art Collection; Victoria and Albert Museum; Worthing Museum and Art Gallery; and all private lenders who wish to remain anonymous.

Special thanks to the V&A Textile Conservation Department for the donation of mannequins.

This exhibition has been made possible as a result of the Government Indemnity Scheme. The Sainsbury Centre would like to thank HM Government for providing Government Indemnity and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Arts Council England for arranging the indemnity.