WOMEN ARTISTS AND THE BRITISH POSTER MOVEMENT (1900 – 1939)

BY

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A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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University of Birmingham

December 2022

Volume 1 of 2

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is the first in-depth account of women poster artists working in Britain between 1900 and 1939. It uncovers and provides insight into the lives of over 250 women artists and analyses the publicity they produced for major companies including the Big Four Railways, the London Underground, and the General Post Office as well as the Government body the Empire Marketing Board.

By examining the poster production of women artists this thesis reveals the changes occurring within the British art world during the early twentieth century. It demonstrates how women used applied art mediums to overcome the gender boundaries of fine-art practice and makes clear how these actions connected to the changing social, political, and cultural position of women in interwar Britain.

However, this thesis is not merely a history of women's poster production, nor is it an attempt to simply re-insert these women into existing scholarly knowledge. Instead, it explores how the status of the poster as both advertising and the 'people's art' dismantled and upended traditional boundaries of artistic practice, and considers the impact identifying such a large number of previously overlooked women can have on scholarly understandings of early twentieth-century art. Accordingly, this thesis focuses on the range of experiences and issues associated with poster production. It explores the multiple jobs fulfilled by women poster artists — ranging from full-time freelance artists to agency workers — and reveals the multiple styles and imagery used in this work, all of which contributed to stylistic changes taking place during this time.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was made possible by Midlands3cities and the AHRC, without whose support I would never have been able to complete this project. M3C's funding gave me the opportunity to embark on vital archival trips and I cannot express my thanks enough to all those librarians and archivists whose help pushed me towards this final work. Thanks, in particular, to Barry Attoe at the Postal Museum, David Hay at the BT Archives, Melissa McGreechan at the TFL archives, and Fiona Waterhouse at Birmingham City University Archive.

More than anyone I would like to thank Francesca Berry who has gone above and beyond in her role as a supervisor. Thank you for sharing your knowledge, time, and ideas with me so generously, for offering me support throughout this entire process, and for being incredibly patient about my apostrophe use (or lack thereof). Thanks also to Richard Hornsey whose comments as my second supervisor have strengthened my thesis considerably.

My years at the University have been what they were because of the art history department. Thank you to everyone who has been a part of it both past and present. Thanks, in particular, to Elizabeth L'Estrange, who provided not only sage advice but also lent me her house during the pandemic, much of this thesis was written at your dining table.

Beyond the department my thanks go to Emma West who has offered continued support and an unwavering enthusiasm for poster art and to David Bownes whose interest in this project has been notable since the very beginning. Thanks also to those who have listened and responded to my research at symposiums or other events over the last few years, your thoughts all proved invaluable to the progress I made.

Thank you to all those who make up my life in Birmingham and who have provided a much-needed distraction from PhD life. Thanks especially to Alice and Kieran Slater, who have been there since the beginning, and to Natalie Grace and William Bateman, without whom I would have probably quit the PhD on day one. Thanks also to Hannah Halliwell who has answered every ridiculous question I have ever asked and kept me going until the end. And thanks to Sophie Hatchwell and Greg Salter for being both mentors and friends throughout this process and of course to Andy, (and Toby), Amy, Greg (T), and Charlie (I put you last so you would pull focus).

Finally, I would like to thank David who has been forced unwillingly into the world of academia by the sheer misfortune of being my boyfriend. Thank you for putting up with the PhD madness and for always knowing when to make me a cup of tea.

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INTRODUCTION: 'THE BEST POSTER ARTISTS OF THE DAY ARE WOMEN'[1]

The 1933 Hollywood film *Cocktail Hour* (director Victor Schertzinger) begins, as the name suggests, at a cocktail party. As the opening credits close and the sound of Victor Schertzinger's *Listen Heart of Mine* draws to an end the camera focuses on a packed ballroom, filled with fashionably dressed partygoers. It is a conventional party scene with wealthy individuals enjoying themselves over drinks. Men and women are seated talking, while waiters carry trays of refreshment amongst them. Meanwhile, in the background, a piano is being played and is filling the room with music that can be heard over the murmured conversation.

What is less typical of the scene, is the woman who stands at the centre of the festivities. Ignoring her fellow revellers she stands painting at an easel, pulling the focus of the camera and the men who surround her. This woman is Cynthia Walker, the self-assured protagonist of *Cocktail Hour* and host of the party we are witnessing. Played by film star Bebe Daniels, Walker is a strong and determined individual who strives throughout the film to maintain her independence against the competing affections of two male suitors. Walker's confidence is asserted from this opening scene. Whilst still working at her easel she stands confidently, with one hand on her hip and her legs spread apart. She spurns the comments of the men around her, asserting that her painting is 'what they pay me for' and dismisses the cocktail she picks up as 'dishwater… weak enough for a man'.

Throughout *Cocktail Hour* Walker attempts to 'rewrite the rules' of women's lifestyles, fighting against male attempts to control her movements (which at one point involve physically locking her in a closet) and befriending other women, such as Olga

[1] Elizabeth D'Oyley, 'Woman Poster Designers', *Yorkshire Post,* 18th July 1927, 6.

Raimoff (Murile Kirkland) who do the same. Although the film ends with Walker accepting the marriage proposal of Randy Morgan (Randolph Scott) and thus returns Walker to her 'rightful place' in the arms of a man, overall, it is a celebration of the growing opportunities available to women in interwar America, in keeping with the feminist ideology of its writer Gertrude Percell.

What makes *Cocktail Hour* significant as an opening to this thesis is that Walker's ability to retain her independence is consistently and unwaveringly attributed to her career as a poster artist — the work we see her undertaking in the opening scene. This profession, which required Walker to produce paintings and drawings that could be transformed into lithographic advertising, is credited with providing her both the autonomy and the finances needed to live the lifestyle she desires. Walker herself asserts this, stating that 'I didn't work for success I worked for freedom' and explaining that her job allowed her to move from her small family farm to her own apartment in New York. While the storyline of *Cocktail Hour,* and Walker's frequent claims that she makes $60,000 a year through poster art, are likely exaggerated for the film's plotline, her success as a woman in this field was not. Women could be found producing posters in a number of countries during the early twentieth century, including America (where Walker works) as well as France, Germany, and Spain. The efforts of these women contributed to a proliferation of lithographic advertising during this period, which was so substantial that the scholar Lynn Hjorn Christianson has termed it a 'poster movement'.[2]

The largest numbers of women poster artists, however, were to be found in Britain. Here, according to Patricia Elaine, their numbers were greater than the USA and the combined total of France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, and the Netherlands. [3] Moreover,

[2] Line Hjorth Christensen, 'Tracking the Poster Movement: An Inquiry into British Modernism by Way of the "British and Foreign Posters" Exhibition, Victoria and Albert Museum, 1931', *Journal of Design History,* 28:2, 2015, 142-160.
[3] Patricia Elaine, 'Poster Pioneers', *Poster Girls*, David Bownes (ed), Exhibition Catalogue, London Transport Museum 2017-2018, London 2017, 173-175.

not only were these British women significant for their numbers, but their output had a far reaching and monumental impact on the world of poster art. Women artists worked on every major advertising campaign of the period, producing posters which promoted companies such as London Transport, The Big Four Railways, Shell Oil, and The General Post Office (GPO).[4] Their work was also widely praised. One artist, Clare Leighton (1898 – 1989), was heralded as a 'genius' by the *Daily Herald* for her Empire Marketing Board (EMB) poster art and another, Freda Lingstrom (1893 – 1989), was praised for an 'excellent' London North Eastern Railway (LNER) poster in the *Spectator.*[5] Meanwhile a poster produced by the artist Arnrid Johnston (1895 – 1972) for London Transport was so popular amongst members of the public that more copies had to be produced, as people sought to buy prints of the work to display in their homes. [6]

The success of women poster artists was so notable that some critics even considered them to be more talented than their male peers. In 1922 a journalist writing for the *Western Mail* claimed that 'some of London's most original and striking advertising posters are designed and executed by women'. [7] In a 1927 article for the *Yorkshire Post* Elizabeth D'Oyley proclaimed 'many of the best poster artists of the day are women'. [8] Meanwhile in 1928 the *Daily Herald* announced that signs suggested that women were 'to be the great poster artists of the future'.[9]

Despite their success during their lifetimes, women's contributions to British poster art have largely been ignored by scholarship and are absent from accounts on poster art as

[4] Until 1933 management of the transport system in London was split between a number of independent organisations with the Underground being run by the Underground Electric Railways Company of London (UERL) while other trams and railway networks were owned by local authorities. However, in 1933 these were amalgamated under the London Passenger Transport Board act placing all transport in the control of a single board containing members from a variety of these former organisations. For ease of reference in this thesis I will refer to all posters pertaining to transport in London as 'London Transport' posters.
[5] G.S.S, 'New Poster Genius', *Daily Herald,* 20th August 1929, 7.
[6] Emanuelle Dirix, 'Fashioning the Tube', *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design*, David Bownes and Oliver Green, (eds) London, 2011, 132 - 144.
[7] Anon., 'Women Poster Artists', *Western Mail,* 19th October 1922, n/p.
[8] D'Oyley, 'Woman Poster Designers'.
[9] Anon., 'Women as Poster Artists', *Daily Herald*, 11th July 1928, 7.

well as histories of art and histories of design. In many ways it would seem that these women — who were so successful during their lifetimes — have been the victims of a double scholarly repression; overlooked because of their gender and forgotten due to their decision to work in the 'lower', applied, field of poster art. In this thesis I will attempt to rectify this omission and provide the first in-depth account of women poster artists working in Britain between 1900 and 1939. To do this I will identify and discuss many of the women working in poster art during this period, outlining their career trajectories, considering the factors that facilitated their success, and examining the artistic significance of their works.

This thesis focuses on a number of unanswered questions surrounding women's work in poster art. These range from basic questions around the field and its structures: Who were these women? What work did they do? How did they manage to find such substantial success? To questions focusing on the wider impact of these individuals: What was the artistic significance of their work? How did their careers relate to the wider movements towards women's independence taking place during this time?

A Brief History of Poster Art

The artistic poster first emerged in France during the 1860s when it was pioneered by artists such as Jules Chéret (1836 – 1932) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864 – 1901).[10] The success of these men in transforming advertisements into aesthetically appealing objects created a movement across Europe, which was continued by artists like Czech painter Alphonse Mucha (1860 – 1939).[11] In Britain, French ideas were taken up by artists such as Aubrey Beardsley (1872 – 1898) and The Beggarstaff Brothers (James Pryde [1866 – 1941] and William Nicholson [1874 – 1949]), who began applying their artistic skills to the

[10] Margaret Timmers, *The Power of the Poster,* Exhibition Catalogue, London, V&A Museum, April 1998, London, 1998, 31-37.
[11] Ibid, 38

production of advertising during the 1890s.[12] The resulting posters were charted in the periodical *The Poster* which was published for two years between 1898 and 1900. Although short lived, *The Poster* was pivotal in defining what was meant by an artistic poster in Britain, and *The Poster's* emphasis on 'originality' and aesthetic enjoyment remain relevant to definitions of poster art today. [13]

The Poster ceased publication in 1900 and this coincided with a decreased interest in poster art in Britain. This apathy continued until the end of the First World War, when improved methods of lithographic printing ignited a renewed interest in aesthetic advertising. This renaissance of poster art was led by Publicity Officer and later Managing Director of London Transport, Frank Pick (1878 – 1941), who began to employ artists to produce advertising for the London's tram and Underground services. [14] Pick's actions were based on his wider desire to merge art with everyday life, typified in his belief that 'art must come down from her pedestal and frame and work for her living'. [15] His influence, and the success of the London Transport posters, encouraged other companies to follow these same practices and lead to a widespread demand for poster artists by the late 1910s.[16]

By the 1920s the status of poster art was so widely recognised that the poster hoardings had come to be known as the 'art galleries of the British public', in recognition of the aesthetic value of their adverts. [17] This was reflected in the press, where art critics became interested in the poster, providing commentary on specific works. As early as 1919 Clive Bell (1881 – 1964) advocated for such critical attention, describing the need for 'intelligent

[12] Ibid, 40.
[13] John Hewitt, '"The Poster" and the Poster in England in the 1890s', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 35:1, 2002, 37-62.
[14] Frank Pick, '"Underground" posters', *Commercial Art*, January 1927, 137-150.
[15] Frank Pick, 'Art and Commerce', February 1916, PB2 LTM.
[16] See for example: John Hewitt, 'Posters of Distinction: Art, Advertising and the London, Midland and Scottish Railways', *Design Issues*, 16:1, 2000, 16-35; John Hewitt, 'The 'Nature' and 'Art' of Shell advertising in the Early 1930s', *Journal of Design History*, 5:2, 1992, 121-139; John Hewitt, 'East Coast Joys: Tom Purvis and the LNER', *The Journal of Transport History*, 8:4, 1995, 291– 311; Medcalf, Alexander, '"We are Always Learning": Marketing the Great Western Railway, 1921-1939', *Journal of Transport History*, 33:2, 2012, 186-211; Mike Barden, *Post Early : GPO Posters, 1920-1960*, London 1993; Yasuko Suga, 'State Patronage of Design?: The Elitism/Commercialism Battle in the General Post Office's Graphic Production', *Journal of Design History,* 13:1, 2000, 23–37; Stephen Constantine, *Buy & Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*, London, 1986.
[17] References to the poster hoardings as the art galleries of the British Public can be found in; Cyril Connolly, 'The New Medici', *The Architectural Review,* 76: 452, July 1 1934, 3–4; Frank Rutter, *Art in My Time*, London 1933, 249; Anon., 'The Prince of Wales on the Art of the Hoardings', *Commercial Art,* June 1923, 160; The Editor, 'Signs of the Times', *Commercial Art,* February 1924, 369.

criticism of posters' in an article for literary journal *Athenaeum*. [18] Bell's call appears to have been met. In 1928 the art critic for the *Observer*, P G Konody wrote about railway posters, reviewing Fred Taylor's (1875 – 1963) 'complicated architectural compositions', and Frank Newbould's (1887 – 1951) 'keen sense of local colour and national character'. [19] Meanwhile, in the same year, Philip Morton Shand reviewed London Transport's poster campaign for the *Architecture Review*, while the journalist and critic Amelia Defries regularly discussed poster art in her column on British art for *The American Magazine of Art*.[20]

This critical interest, coupled with a number of other factors which will be discussed throughout this thesis, led to a widespread contemporary acceptance of the poster as an artistic object. This status contrasts the poster's position today in both scholarship (where it is generally viewed as inferior to fine art) and in society (where posters are viewed simply as advertising). This contradiction is summed up by Nikki Frater in her thesis on the poster artist Rex Whistler (1905 – 1944). [21] Here Frater noted that

> From a vantage point in the twenty-first century fine art may be privileged over commercial art and an assumption made that artists at that time had no choice but to compromise and sell their services to these new patrons. But what if this was actually a career choice rather than simple necessity - modern artists engaging with contemporary commercial practices and forms of communication for a modern world? [22]

[18] Clive Bell, 'London Posters', *The Athenaeum*, 4662, 1919, 854.
[19] P G Konody, 'Poster Art and the Railway Companies', *The Observe*r, 17th March 1929, 14.
[20] Phillip Morton Shand, 'Underground', *The Architectural Review*, 1st November 1929, 66:396, 217-224; Amelia Defries, 'Modern Art', *Saturday Review*, 3669, 20th February 1926, 228–228.
[21] Nikki Frater, 'Rex Whistler (1905 – 1944): Patronage and Artistic Identity', Thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth, September 2013.
[22] Ibid, 223.

I will follow Frater's understanding of the poster as 'a career choice' in this thesis. In line with this, throughout these chapters the poster will be discussed as an art form which men and women actively participated in and which they used to develop and engage with key artistic ideas.

WOMEN ARTISTS AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF POSTER ART

As with almost all areas of women's artistic production, the consideration of women artists within poster scholarship has been limited and women's presence has notably been absent from many accounts on this subject. Prolific women poster artists — such as Dora Batty (1891 – 1966) or Herry Perry (1897 – 1962) — are rarely discussed with the frequency of male poster artists — such as Edward Mcknight Kauffer (1890 – 1954) — despite these women producing similar levels of artistic output during their lifetimes. Meanwhile, the names of women artists are rarely included in role-calls of notable poster artists. In her article 'Art for the People' Margaret Rossoff describes the output of London Transport solely through a list of male artists: 'Rex Whistler, Graham Sutherland, Frank Brangwyn, Edward McKnight Kauffer, Jacob Epstein, Man Ray, Hans Schleger, Henry Moore, and Laszlo Moholy-Nagy'. [23] Similarly, Dieter Hopkin and Beverly Callard describe the period they consider to be the 'Golden Age of the railway poster' through 'artists such as Cassandre, Edward McKnight Kauffer, Fred Taylor, and Tom Purvis'. [24]

The choice of illustrations used in poster scholarship also perpetuates this female absence, with works by women artists rarely being reproduced to the extent of their male peers. Of the sixty images included in Stephen Constantine's book on the poster campaign of the EMB, *Buy & Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board,* just one is

[23]Margaret Rossoff, 'Art for the People', *Print*, 51:3, 1997, 78-85.
[24]Dieter W Hopkin and Beverly Cole, 'The Railway Poster in Britain', *Japan Railway and Transport Review*, 1998, 23.

by a woman artist (Clare Leighton) despite multiple women contributing to the EMB's output. [25] In contrast, Constantine reproduces four works by McKnight Kauffer, eight works by Charles Pears (1873 – 1958) and five works by Newbould, arguably over-emphasising their contribution to the EMB.[26] Similarly, just eight out of one hundred and thirteen posters in the exhibition catalogue *The Power of the Poster* were produced by named women artists (with one other by an unknown member of the suffragette movement) again, perpetuating the belief than men dominated this industry.[27]

Taken together, these lists and illustration decisions wrongly imply that men made up the most notable percentage of poster output during this era, both in terms of quantity and artistic significance. They also wrongly create the illusion that posters produced by male artists are 'typical' examples of poster art while those by women are in some way 'other'. Even when women are discussed within poster scholarship such othering is continued. Women's posters are generally held to different standards than their male contemporaries, as scholars use gendered terms to describe women's art. For example, when discussing the posters produced for Shell Oil, John Hewitt described works by male artists Graham Sutherland (1903 – 1980) and Paul Nash (1889 – 1946) as presenting a 'picture postcard countryside' in reference to their picturesque landscape scenes. [28] However, when referring to similar posters by Vanessa Bell (1879 – 1961) and Edna Clark Hall (1879 – 1979) Hewitt uses the term 'rural prettiness', implying that the artists' femininity was imprinted on their work.[29] This assumption of entrenched gender differences between the works of men and women artists is so apparent that it can even lead to inaccurate scholarship. Ralph Harrington wrongly implies that a poster by Eileen Seyd (1908 – 1967) is by a male artist because it features feminine figures, something Harrington believes was motivated by the 'desire of

[25] Constantine, *Buy & Build*.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Timmers, *Power of the Poster*.
[28] Hewitt, 'Shell Advertising', 121–139.
[29] Ibid, 128.

male artists to draw and paint women'. [30] Such gendered analysis of women's work will be challenged throughout this thesis, with chapters two and four focusing on this in detail.

It is important to remember, of course, that omissions and gendering's of the works of women artists are not necessarily because authors of poster art scholarship are especially misogynistic. Instead, it is more likely to be a symptom of the entrenched biases and limitations within art history. As a discipline, art history has been hostile to poster art. The posters' dual status, as both art and advertising, has led it to be positioned in categories of 'commercial' or 'applied' art by many scholars, areas which have rarely received the scholarly attention they deserve. This hostility has forced poster researchers to argue for the scholarly value of their writing, often turning to pre-existing and established templates of artistic historiography to demonstrate the significance of their research.

The most notable example of poster scholarship's reliance on existing templates of art history can be seen in the attempt to identify a 'male genius' within poster art. These attempts have led to a proliferation of biographies and exhibitions focused on single male figures, such as McKnight Kauffer and Tom Purvis (1888 –1959) who have been celebrated in the same manner as male fine-art artists throughout history. In evidence of the strength of this trend the last two years have seen three more books published in this area; a significant number given the small size of the field of poster scholarship. These texts — *E McKnight Kauffer: The Artist in Advertising* by Caitlin Condell and Emily M. Orr*, Tom Eckersley: A mid-century Modern Master* by Paul Rennie and *John Hassall: Life and Art of the Poster King* by Lucinda Gosling — all present their artist as the pinnacle figure of poster art. In doing so these authors adopt ideas of innate artistic talent which are common (despite their problematic nature) in biographic art history.[31]

[30] Ralph Harrington, 'Beyond the Bathing Belle: Images of Women in Inter-War Railway Publicity', *The Journal of Transport History,* 25:1, 2004, 22–45, 27.
[31] Caitlin Condell and Emily M. Orr, *E McKnight Kauffer: The Artist in Advertising*, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum, September 2021 – April 2022, New York, 2020; Paul Rennie, *Tom Eckersley: A Mid-Century Modern Master,* London, 2021; Lucinda Gosling, *John Hassall: Life and Art of the Poster King,* London 2021.

Where it does exist, scholarship on women artists often follows this same focus on artistic brilliance and results in a eulogization of specific women, who are again singled out for research. However, while male artists like John Hassall (1868 – 1948) are presented as 'kings' and discussed using language which elevates them over their multiple talented contemporaries, women artists are presented as a remarkable, unique, or unusual example of women's success. Not only do such perspectives overstate individual women's achievements, but they have also led to an inaccurate belief that women poster artists worked independently from their fellow artists. [32] For example, Betty Miles presents Margaret Calkin James' (1895 – 1985) work in poster art as a personal practice, which Calkin James was able to achieve because of her innate artistic talent. [33] She goes on to suggest that this practice appealed to Calkin James because of her 'sincere commitment to the ideals and teachings of Christian Science', a perspective which presents Calkin James' work as a personal, spiritual, act and ignores the growth of the commercial art world. [34] This individualistic scholarship will be reconsidered throughout this thesis, as I establish the wider world of poster production that existed during this time.

A further impact of the dismissal of poster art within art history is that poster scholarship has been dominated by those outside academia such as enthusiasts (Gosling), collectors (Ruth Artmonsky, Rennie), or curators (Cole and Durack) who often hold a vested interest in promoting particular artists or collections of works. [35] Again, women artists have been hampered within this literature due to male-focused collecting policies, which have

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[32] Examples of this include; Josephine Walpole, *Anna: A Memorial Tribute to Anna Zinkeisen,* London, 1978; Britta C Dwyer, 'Negotiating "New" venues in art: Doris and Anna Zinkeisen in modernising London', Karen Brown, (ed.), *Women's Contributions to Visual Culture, 1918-1939*, Aldershot, 2008, 117-138; Betty Miles, *At the Sign of the Rainbow: Margaret Calkin James 1895-1985*, Alcester, 1996.
[33] Miles, *Sign of the Rainbow.*
[34] Betty Miles, 'Margaret Calkin James: Designer Calligrapher and Painter', Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden (ed), *Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars*, Exhibition Catalogue, University of Brighton Gallery, March 1994, Brighton, 1994, 115-123.
[35] Beverly Cole and Richard Durack, *Railway Posters 1923-1947: From the Collection of the National Railway Museum,* York, York, 1992; Paul Rennie, *Modern British Posters : Art, Design & Communication*, London, 2010; Ruth Artmonsky, *Unashamed Artists: A Celebratory Miscellany on Advertising Art*, London, 2014; Ruth Artmonsky, *Designing Women: Women Working in Advertising and Publicity from the 1920s to the 1960s,* London, 2012.

meant their works are less likely to be held in museum collections than their male colleagues. The desire to showcase collections of works has also affected the types of books written on poster art, resulting in texts favouring brightly coloured reproductions of posters rather than an in-depth analysis of the works. Although beneficial in raising the profile of poster art over recent years, such literature is limited in the insights it can provide. It therefore perpetuates the conviction that significant analysis cannot be made of poster art and consolidates the poster's position outside academic scholarship.

The predominance of amateur authors within poster scholarship has also resulted in books which are driven by opinion rather than scholarly research. A particularly notable example of this is *Designing Women* by Artmonsky. [36] This book is one of a series of self-published works by the author whose interest in commercial art and design is based on her own collections of graphic art. It is therefore structured around Artmonsky's personal opinions and beliefs. For example, Artmonsky justifies her brief analysis of railway posters through her belief that the works were 'conservative' in comparison to images for the Underground, a label she believes makes them less important. [37] Other enthusiast authors are influenced by their personal connection to the subject. In his book on sisters Doris (1898 – 1991) and Anna Zinkeisen (1901–1976), Phillip Kelleway recalls visiting Doris Zinkeisen's home when he was a child 'where he was greatly impressed by their work'. [38] This early enthusiasm is presumably the reason for his glowing review of both women in his writing. A positivity which is likely to have been increased further by his connections to the artists' families, who he thanks for allowing him to stay in their homes during his research. [39]

Within the mass of highly illustrated literature on poster art, poster exhibition catalogues stand out as offering the most useful insight into women artists. A number of

[36] Artmonsky, *Designing Women*.
[37] Ibid, 104, 108.
[38] Philip Kelleway, *Highly Desirable: The Zinkeisen Sisters & Their Legacy*, Suffolk, 2008, 3.
[39] Ibid.

exhibition catalogues contain essays on women's poster production. Emanuelle Dirix wrote a chapter for the London Transport Museum catalogue *London Transport Posters* in 2008, in which she discusses the work of women artists and considers how this related to growing women's freedoms during this time. [40] Similarly, Teri Edelstein discusses the emergence of women artists in relation to her exhibition, *Art for All: British Posters for Transport* which was held at the Yale Art Centre in 2010. [41] Here, Edelstein attempts to ascertain how many women produced transport posters during this era and to explain why this number was so high.[42] Both texts provide important starting points for my own discussions of poster art in Chapter Two of this thesis. However, while these authors attempt to explain women's involvement in this industry through an understanding of the woman consumer, I will develop their arguments further and offer a longer and more in-depth account of the complex issues surrounding the production of poster art.

Arguably the most significant catalogue on women poster artists was produced for the *Poster Girls* exhibition, which was held at the London Transport Museum between October 2017 and January 2019. [43] Curated by David Bownes this exhibition focused on the women who produced poster art for London Transport over the last 120 years and was the first concerted effort to collate these names. The *Poster Girls* exhibition was widely promoted on news platforms, such as the BBC, who published images of the posters on their website. [44] This, coupled with the exhibition's success, demonstrates the public's interest in poster art and the desire for further information on these women. A demand which I hope to help satiate through this thesis.

[40] Dirix, 'Fashioning the Tube'.
[41] Teri J Edelstein, 'Graphic Opportunities Women artists and the Underground', *Art for All,* Exhibition Catalogue*,* New Haven Connecticut, Yale Arts Centre*,* June - August 2010, Connecticut*,* 2010, 105-126.
[42] Ibid.
[43] David Bownes, *Poster Girls,* Exhibition Catalogue, London, London Transport Museum 2017-2018, London, 2017, 89-91.
[44] Anon., 'Poster Girls exhibition showcases forgotten design heroines', *BBC News,* https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-41552276 ,13 October 2017 (accessed September 2022).

Despite its popularity *Poster Girls* also had significant problems. The exhibition's title diminished the work of professional women artists and instead traded on ideas of glamour and sex. Meanwhile, the exhibition catalogue prioritised images of the posters and photographs of their artists over any real analysis of the works. It seems highly possible that many of the problems with the *Poster Girls* exhibition stemmed from a desire to generate public interest in the show and appeal to the current zeitgeist of reclaiming forgotten women from history. Although following many of the same aims as this thesis and thus beneficial to increasing knowledge of women's art production, such events are highly flawed. The woman-focused blockbuster exhibition has recently been criticised by Griselda Pollock for focusing on the 'personal rather than artistic' in a way which often 'involves silencing, by omission, challenging feminist interpretation while promoting public fascination with the artist through sensationalising the details of their lives'.[45] Such a criticism can equally be applied to the *Poster Girls* exhibition, which focused on celebrating individual artists and their visually appealing works, rather than exploring the significance of the mass involvement by women in poster art. In this thesis I hope to move against this superficial focus, not only considering *what* works were produced by women poster artists but also *how* they were created and *why*.

RESEARCH METHODS

A central intention of my research and this thesis has been to identify how many women were working in poster art between 1900 and 1939. In order to gather the names of these artists I have relied heavily on primary sources and archives, which have allowed me to supplement existing scholarship and compile the most complete list of women producing poster art during this era as possible. So far, I have been able to identify 197 women who were paid to

[45] Griselda Pollock, 'Women artists: the belated craze for blockbuster shows is welcome – but it's not enough', *The Conversation,* 20th September 2022, https://theconversation.com/women-artists-the-belated-craze-for-blockbuster-shows-is-welcome-but-its-not-enough-190121 (accessed September 2022).

produce a poster design between the years 1910 and 1939, as well as a further 68 women who received cash prizes for their poster designs in poster competitions (discussed in greater detail in Chapter One). Together (acknowledging the duplications between these categories) this means that there were at least 258 women who were making money from the production of poster art in Britain between 1900 and 1939. It is important to remember however, that my figures do not include the countless other women who entered poster competitions but did not win prizes, or those who entered smaller competitions whose results were not recorded in the press. It also does not include those who produced poster art under initials, a male pseudonym (unless recognised), anonymously, or the hundreds of women who produced poster art as employees of an advertising agency.

The names of all identified artists are recorded in a series of tables listed in Appendix One. These tables include key information about these artists, including their birth and death dates, their education, the address they worked at, and the companies they worked for. As well as providing a reference point for those reading my thesis, these tables are also intended to act as a tool for further research into the artists I discuss. I hope that they will offer a starting point for further scholarship on women's poster production and for research into the individual artists who worked in this field.

In producing this thesis, I have relied heavily on substantial primary research. Many of the sources I consulted are unusual within art-historical scholarship. For example, I have relied heavily on the records and meeting minutes of companies commissioning poster art, including London Transport (held at St James' Park), the EMB (held at the National Archives), and the GPO (held at the Postal Museum). These records frequently contain lists of the artists commissioned to produce work as well as information on the types of posters produced, the cost of this production, and public responses. They therefore offer a valuable insight into the industry as it existed during this time. Other sources are more typical of art

history. As noted above, poster art was frequently reviewed by art critics meaning that considerable information on the works can be found in art journals, trade journals, and newspaper reports. Of particular importance to this thesis are reviews of poster exhibitions, such as those held by the LNER. In addition to offering critical assessments of the posters these reviews often featured lists of those artists whose posters were shown. [46] They therefore offer further insight into artists' practices even if the posters themselves no longer exist.

In addition to the above sources the information in Appendix One is also compiled from public records including censuses, electoral registers, birth, marriage, and death certificates, the 1939 register (a register taken at the outbreak of war), trade directories, and phone books. Government or public records such as these are particularly important because — with the exception of Calkin James and Helen Mckie (1889 –1957) whose archives are held by the V & A — there are few archives or collections focused on the individual women discussed in this thesis. This is not unusual when researching women artists. The records of such women have often been deemed unworthy of preservation, something Nancy Heller believes partially explains the lack of scholarship on women artists' careers. [47]

An absence of records is especially true if the women discussed were unmarried or childless, as many discussed in this thesis were. This was because a stable marriage made it less likely that a woman would change address during her career, making it easier to track her movements at a particular time. Moreover, having children, grandchildren, or other descendants makes it more likely that a woman's legacy and her documents are preserved. Of those women poster artists we know most about, almost all had children who championed their work. It has already been noted that the children of both Zinkiesen sisters assisted Kelleway in writing a biography of the sisters' lives.[48] Similarly Calkin James' daughter and

[46] Anon., 'Poster Art and Advertising', *The Bystander*, 3rd April 1929, 23-24; Anon., 'Railway Poster Beauty', *Sheffield Independent*, 3rd April 1930, 12; Anon., 'Poster Art Gallery', *Aberdeen Press and Journal*, 22nd March 1929, 15.
[47] Nancy Heller, *Woman Artists*, New York, 1987, 11-13.
[48] Kelleway, *Highly Desirable*, 3-4.

grandchildren have been integral to the promotion of her art and have spoken about her in interviews and assisted Miles with her biography.[49]

My reliance on primary sources has been particularly difficult to navigate in the face of the Covid 19 pandemic which has dominated much of my PhD experience. The restrictions of the pandemic have impacted my research in a number of notable ways. Although I was able to conduct considerable primary research before the restrictions were implemented (and managed to complete other research online) the pandemic significantly curtailed my progress as it occurred during my second year when much of my archival research was due to be conducted. In some cases, it has not been possible to make up for the losses of the pandemic. The V & A Archive of Art and Design has not reopened following its closure in March 2020 (and is not due to reopen until 2024). This archive forms a considerable basis for my research and although I had conducted a number of visits prior to its closure I had planned further visits as my research developed. Another major impact was the closure and then sale of the Curwen Archive. I had planned to visit this collection in April 2020 but was unable to due to lockdown. It was then sold (without reopening to the public) at two auctions in August 2020 and March 2021. [50]

As a work of art-historical scholarship this thesis relies heavily on visual analysis of the posters discussed, especially in Chapters Four and Five. This reliance on posters raises a variety of issues. Accessing poster art is a complex and contradictory process, as the poster is at once more accessible than many other art forms and yet also more difficult to find. The ephemeral nature of the poster makes survival of individual works less likely than works of

[49] Miles uses Calkin James's daughter Elizabeth Argent as a reference throughout both *Sign of the Rainbow* and in 'Margaret Calkin James: Designer Calligrapher and Painter'; Fiona Camplin also interviewed Argent in a recording found here https://soundcloud.com/fiona-clampin/margaret-calkin-james (accessed June 2021).
[50] John Downing, 'End of an era as Curwen Studio print archive goes on sale', *Cambridge Independent,* 26 August 2020 https://www.cambridgeindependent.co.uk/news/end-of-an-era-as-curwen-studio-print-archive-goes-on-sale-9120876/ (accessed February 2022); Alex Capon, 'The Curwen Studio archive dispersed', *Antiques Trade Gazette,* 16 May 2021, https://www.antiquestradegazette.com/print-edition/2021/may/books-maps-prints-2021/20th-century-prints/the-curwen-studio-archive-dispersed/ (accessed February 2022).

fine art, as posters were not generally considered worthy of preservation until at least the 1960s, by which time many were lost. For example, a number of posters were destroyed following their removal from the hoardings or else damaged or pasted over while being displayed. Others were used as insulation in buildings or turned into mulch for reuse as paper. Survival is made even less likely as a result of the paper salvage campaign of 1939 to 1950 when members of the public were encouraged to recycle or salvage paper to help the war effort.[51] This campaign saw the destruction of many surviving posters and has had a significant impact on research it is possible to conduct today.

In some cases, while an original copy of a poster no longer exists it is possible to track down reproductions of it in commercial art magazines. For example, in 1927 Freda Beard produced a poster *Hunt's Port* which featured the figures of two pirates conversing in front of their ships. Copies of this poster no longer exist but we know of its existence courtesy of a full-page reproduction of the poster which can be found in the 1927 July edition of *Commercial Art* magazine.[52] Although there are some issues with creating analysis from reproductions — in particular when it comes to understanding the size of a work and its colours — it is possible to gauge some information from reproduced imagery, which can be used as the basis for analysis.

A further issue with accessing poster art stems from the poster's status as a 'lower value' object, as this makes it less likely that museum and galleries will have catalogues or records of the posters they possess. A number of collections which hold posters have no catalogue of these individual objects, making a single poster harder to track down. For example, although holding a sizable collection of posters — including works by Lingstrom and Perry —Leamington Spa Museum and Gallery have no record of these posters in their collection. It was my own visit in November 2019 which identified the artists, and therefore

[51] Henry Irving, 'Paper Salvage in Britain during the Second World War', *Historical Research*, 89.244, 2016, 373–93.
[52] Illustration, *Commercial Art*, July 1927, 118.

the significance, of these posters at all. Furthermore, even when museums do hold catalogues of their poster collections these are unlikely to be available to members of the public. Instead, they are normally internal catalogues assigning posters' object numbers but not providing any information or distinguishing features of the works.

Regardless of these issues there are some advantages to poster research over research into other art forms. As a result of the production process of poster art (in which multiple copies of each work were printed) many of the posters discussed in this thesis can be found in multiple collections and galleries. This makes gaining access to a poster easier than for a single work of fine art. For example, copies of Perry's London Underground poster *Morden* have been sold at numerous auctions over the last fifteen years (including Christies in 2010 and Bloomsbury in 2012) and can also be found in multiple collections including the Victoria and Albert Museum, the London Transport Museum, and the design archive at Birmingham College.

METHODOLOGY

While an identification of the names and details of women poster artists lies at the heart of my research, this thesis is about more than a recuperation of women's names and artworks into history. In it I will also explore how the status of the poster as both advertising and the 'people's art' dismantled and upended traditional boundaries of artistic practice, and consider the impact identifying such a large number of previously overlooked women can have on scholarly understandings of early twentieth-century art. My thesis will therefore draw heavily on methodology found within both poster art history and feminist art history and will use these methods and theories to discuss the multiple ideas which arise from the production of poster art by women.

Despite largely being confined to books by enthusiasts there are key examples of academic scholarship on poster art. The most notable of these is Ruth Iskin's book *The Poster: Art, Advertising, Design, and Collecting, 1860s–1900s*.[53] Iskin's understanding of the artistic poster as a poster which 'aestheticized the crude commercial appeal of the earlier commercial poster through color, [sic] composition, and line' but remained fundamentally a selling tool, will be adopted throughout this thesis.[54] Like Iskin, I will consider the posters I discuss as both objects of women's artistic expression (in particular in Chapter Five) and as evidence of women's contribution to the advertising industry (in particular in Chapters Two and Four).

Theories on the middlebrow also assist with understanding the posters' complex position as both art and advert and thus provide the foundations for this thesis. Although traditionally a topic within literary studies, academics such as Hana Leaper have argued for the value of the middlebrow to art history in recent years. [55] The middlebrow's complex nature — straddling both high and lowbrow culture — relates clearly to the poster's hybrid status and therefore underpins many of the arguments made in this thesis. For example, Emma West's belief that the middlebrow held particular value during the early twentieth century provides the basis for my own attempts to understand how the poster altered artistic boundaries and offered substantial creative opportunities for women (discussed most notably in Chapters Two and Five of this thesis).[56] Meanwhile Melissa Sullivan and Sophie Blanch's belief that the middlebrow's complex status proved 'problematic' for its producers when 'acquiring cultural capital or even a clear generic identity' sheds light on the complex status

[53] Ruth Iskin, *The Poster: Art, Advertising, Design, and Collecting, 1860s-1900s*, New Hampshire, 2014.
[54] Ibid, 6.
[55] Hana Leaper 'Introduction to Midldlebrow' *Tate Etc* 2018, 42; Hana Leaper, '"Old-fashioned modern": Claude Flight's Lino-Cuts and Public Taste in the Interwar Period', *Modernist Cultures*, 11:3, 2016, 398-408. The middlebrow's relevance to art history was also discussed in the panel 'Visual Art and the Middlebrow' at the 2021 AAH conference.
[56] Emma West, 'The Highs and Lows of Modernism: A Cultural Deconstruction', Unpublished PhD thesis, January 2017, Cardiff University.

of the poster artist, who was both a creative producer and a facilitator of commercial propaganda (as discussed in Chapters Four and Five).[57]

Beyond discussions of the poster's artistic status, this entire thesis is focused on issues of gender. In it I frequently refer to the artists discussed as 'women' artists, using this as a means of discussing them collectively. I use this term while recognising the potential pitfalls of such a label — which is based on a constructed identity placed on these artists by society and may wrongly categorise an individual or imply a connection between them solely because of their gender. Regardless of these issues I believe that, due to the circumstances within which these artists were working, their status as 'women' had a significant impact on their experiences, making it an important factor to acknowledge. My understanding of this follows Pollock's considerable writing on women artists, in particular her assertion that 'when writing about women — we should not read for signs of a known femininity… but for signs of femininity's structurally conditioned and dissonant struggle with phallocentrism'.[58] Pollock's ideas, and those of many others writing after her, have allowed me to consider the complexity of femininity in relation to artistic status. This is particularly important to Chapters Three and Four in which I discuss the alternative lifestyles of many women poster artists, who fought against the typical and expected feminine experience by gaining a professional identity, living and working alone, remaining unmarried, and pursuing same-sex relationships.

A Brief Note on The Empire Marketing Board

Several of the posters discussed in this thesis were produced by the Empire Marketing Board (EMB), a government organisation which was formed in 1926 to encourage trade and

[57] Melissa Sullivan and Sophie Blanch, 'Introduction: The Middlebrow – Within or Without Modernism', *Modernist Cultures* 16:2, 1-17.
[58] Griselda Pollock, *Differencing the Canon: Feminism and the Writing of Art's Histories*, London, 2013, 33.

consumption amongst the countries which made up the British Empire. Ostensibly the board was intended to present empire trade as a mutually beneficial practice which bound the empire countries together. However, as Melanie Horton has noted, it was also a final attempt to maintain free trade amongst the empire against the growing threat of tariff reform.[59] Many of the EMB's key campaigns were promoted through their posters which appeared on specially constructed hoardings up and down the country. A number of these were produced by the women artists discussed in this thesis, including Leighton, Irene Fawkes (1886 – 1977), Batty and Calkin James, with at least thirteen women artists holding some connection to these campaigns.

From the vantage point of the twenty-first century, it is abundantly clear that the EMB was an inherently flawed and racist organisation, making a discussion of its poster art a particularly complex issue. Some of the EMB's posters are overtly problematic, such as Adrian Allinson's series *Colonial Progress Brings Home Prosperity* (fig. 1) which features crude depictions of African workers under the watchful gaze and control of a dominant white masculine figure. Others may appear to be inoffensive, for example F C Harrison's *Make the Empire Christmas Pudding* (fig. 2) but are complicit in the same issues through their promotion of a hegemonic imperial power. Throughout this thesis I remain aware of the inherent problems of the EMB posters and the role of those women who contributed to their making. However, the issues associated with the EMB do not mean that these posters should be absent from discussions of poster history. As Simon Potter has noted, 'the British population, including the working classes, experienced empire through consumption' above all else.[60] This meant that for many British people the EMB posters were their foremost contact with the empire.[61] Understanding the EMB posters for both their imagery and their

[59] Melanie Horton, 'Propaganda, Pride and Prejudice, Revisiting the Empire Marketing Board Posters at Manchester City Galleries', Unpublished PhD thesis, Manchester Metropolitan University, 2010.
[60] Simon J Potter, 'Empire, Cultures and Identities in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Britain', *History Compass*, 5.1, 2007, 55.
[61] Ibid.

production process is therefore vital to understanding public receptions of the empire during the early twentieth century and I hope that this thesis will contribute some insight into this.

In line with these ideas, the EMB has been one of the most researched areas of poster production in recent years. In her article, 'Modern Institutions and the Civilizing Mission', West considered how modern, avant-garde styles were used to fulfil the EMB's secretary Stephen Tallents' desire to 'present the Empire as a forward-looking conception' of continued importance in the modern world.[62] Meanwhile Horton has considered the place of these posters in museums today, in particular in Manchester Art Gallery where the largest collection of these works is held.[63] Horton concludes that because the 'posters continue to have significance and rhetorical power today' the collection can be used to highlight and explore key issues of post-colonial identity in public spaces.[64] Other notable recent studies on the EMB include Uma Kothari's study of the posters in relation to contemporary fair trade initiatives and Felicity Barnes' assessment of the posters as establishers of 'dominion discourse' in which white colonies (Australia, Canada, New Zealand) were presented as sharing key similarities with Britain, separating them from other non-white colonies. [65] While this thesis does not touch directly on the imperialist significance and legacy of the EMB posters, my discussion is written through the lens of these issues and an understanding of the need for further research into the works.

THESIS STRUCTURE

I begin this thesis by examining what it meant to be a woman poster artist during the first forty years of the twentieth century. To do this Chapter One 'The Types of Poster Artist'

[62] Stephen Tallents as quoted in Emma West, 'Modern Institutions and the Civilizing Mission', *Modernism/Modernity*, 5:2, 2020.
[63] Horton, 'Propaganda, Pride and Prejudice', 127.
[64] Ibid, 241.
[65] Uma Kothari, 'Trade, consumption and development alliances: the historical legacy of the Empire Marketing Board poster campaign', *Third World Quarterly*, 2014, 35:1, 43-64; Felicity Barnes 'Bringing Another Empire Alive? The Empire Marketing Board and the Construction of Dominion Identity, 1926–33', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 2014, 42:1, 61-85.

outlines the case studies of five women artists who worked in this industry at some point between 1900 and 1939. These artists — Batty, Zinkeisen, Daphne Barry (1906 – unknown), Miss A and Bell — are each used to define a 'type' of career that could be had in the field of poster art, representing the full-time poster artist, fine-art artist, competition winner, agency worker, and celebrity artist respectively. By discussing these artists, I aim to provide the foundations for the analysis conducted throughout this thesis and answer basic but fundamental questions surrounding women's poster production. These include who were the women involved in poster art? How did they enter this industry? What did they do? And how did their careers progress?

Moving on from a focus on individual artists, in Chapter Two '"One of the Foremost Professions for the Female Artist"' I begin to consider the wider industry of poster art, in order to understand why so many women were able to enter this world of work, despite continued limitations on women's artistic production.[66] This chapter will begin with a discussion of the links between women's employment and the importance of the woman consumer, whose status as the main purchaser was widely recognised in Britain during this time. However, for much of this chapter I will dispute typical views on this subject (as put forward by Edelstein and Dirix), which suggest that the need to encourage women's consumption was the sole reason for women's employment in poster art.[67] Instead, I will argue that other factors effected women's work in this field. These factors include the demand for increasingly large numbers of aesthetically pleasing posters, the growing calls for women's work during the early twentieth century, the posters status as an applied art which could be produced and sold from home, and the appeal of this industry due to the opportunities it offered for creativity. This chapter will also include my first discussion of

[66] George Wade, 'Poster-Art Work for Girls: A talk with Miss Gladys Peto, the Well-known Artist', *The Empire Annual for Girls*, 1920, 197-200.
[67] Dirix, 'Fashioning the Tube'; Edelstein, *Art for All.*

suffragette poster art, which I believe provided important foundations for the later women's poster movement.

Chapter Three 'The Accessibility of Poster Art' continues this analysis of the wider poster industry to assess how accessible this profession was to women artists. Here I will compare the poster industry to the world of fine-art production and assess the claim of poster artist Gladys Peto (1890 – 1977) that 'any girl' could gain work in poster art.[68] In particular this chapter will focus on the three factors that scholars routinely return to when discussing women's access to artistic careers. These are the need for family connections to the art world, the need for middle-class status and economic security, and the need for a private studio in which to work.

While the first three chapters focus on the industry of poster art and the women involved in poster production, the final two chapters focus on the posters themselves. Across both of these chapters I attempt to answer the relatively simple question: why do the posters look the way they do? In line with this, Chapter Four 'The Ideal Woman' will focus specifically on the large number of idealised feminine figures included in the posters produced by women artists. Here, I will attempt to explain why so many of these figures followed the same archetypes and appeared to promote values that at were odds with the liberal lifestyles of their artistic producers. This chapter will begin by considering the feminine figure as a selling tool, discussing how images of an idealised woman were the most efficient ways of promoting consumption to an audience. I will then proceed to consider the feminine figure as an aspirational image intended for the enjoyment of the middle-class viewer, before finally considering how these conservative figures could be used as a foil through which their artists might relay subversive or progressive ideas. This chapter will also note the restrictions women artists faced when producing their posters and will highlight the

[68] Wade, 'Poster-Art'.

rules around representation they needed to follow if they wished to continue to gain commissions in this field.

Finally, in Chapter Five 'A New Artistic Arena' I will consider the artistic achievements of women poster artists and demonstrate the ways their artworks contributed to wider developments in the art world. To do this I will tie the posters to two of the central art movements of the early twentieth century — modernism and the focus on landscape art. This chapter will begin by noting the innovative appearance of posters by Lingstrom, Kathleen Stenning (dates unknown), Sybil Andrews (1898 – 1992) and Annie Fletcher (1869 – 1942), and will consider how these artists used a move towards abstraction to depict the modern world in their poster art. In doing this I will also reveal a number of ways women's achievements have been overlooked by scholarship and often wrongly attributed to men, due to a reluctance to accept the poster as an art form. The second half of this chapter will consider how other women artists used their work in poster design to contribute to a broader development of modern landscape painting in Britain. Focusing on the work of Clare Leighton, and Brynhild Parker (1907 – 1987) this section will reveal how poster art could be used to complement and develop an artist's wider achievements in fine art, as well as how artistically produced posters could benefit the company advertised.

Overall, this thesis aims to identify the large number of women working in poster art during the early twentieth century, whose names have been lost or omitted due to the limited scholarly attention given to this subject. In doing so I also hope to go some way in acknowledging the impact that these women had on British visual culture, relating their work to developments in poster art (such as the creation of new stylistic approaches) and to changes in fine art. Finally, this thesis will touch on the unusual nature of poster art and the opportunities it offered for change and advancement. This included the opportunities poster art gave women to gain well-paid work during a period when this was unusual, the chances of

artistic fame and notoriety it offered, and the potential to use the poster to put forward new ideological ideas at a time when women's voices were often silenced.

CHAPTER ONE: THE TYPES OF POSTER ARTIST

Born just three years apart the artists Ethel Gabain (1883 – 1950) and Irene Fawkes enjoyed very different artistic careers. Gabain, who was born in France in 1883 moved to England in her twenties and received artistic training from leading London and Paris art schools.[1] She proceeded to gain success as both a print artist and a painter and exhibited regularly at the Royal Academy from 1922.[2] In 1940 Gabain became acting president of the Society of Women Artists and during World War Two (WW2) she produced artworks for the War Artists Advisory committee.[3] Then, in 1948 she entered the painting competition at the London Olympics, just two years before her death in 1950.[4] In contrast to Gabain, Fawkes did not travel to London or Paris for her artistic education and instead received much of her artistic training from the lesser-known Chelmsford School of Science and Arts.[5] She never exhibited at the Royal Academy, or at any other major exhibition site, and there is no evidence of her being a member of groups such as the Society of Women Artists. Moreover, while Gabain's career continued into the 1940s Fawkes' production of art appears to have come to an end following the outbreak of WW2 and after this event no further record of Fawkes' art or life exists.

Despite these obvious differences, Gabain and Fawkes share a notable connection. Both artists produced poster designs as part of their artistic output creating posters for London Transport between 1921 and 1935. As a result of this work, both Gabain and Fawkes

[1] Alice Strickland 'Ethel Gabain, Evelyn Gibbs and Evelyn Dunbar: three approaches to professional art practice in interwar Britain' in *Women's contributions to visual culture 1918-1939,* Karen Brown (ed), Aldershot, 2008, 139-156.
[2] *The Exhibition of The Royal Academy*, Catalogues, 1922-1939.
[3] Katy Deepwell, *Women Artists between the War*, Manchester, 2010, 196.
4 "Art Competitions at the 1948 Summer Olympics: Painting, Graphic Arts, Open", *Olympedia*, https://www.olympedia.org/results/920071 (accessed June 2021).
[5] Anon., 'Chelmsford Art Students Success', *Chelmsford Chronicle,* 5th September 1913, 3.

adhere to my understanding of a woman poster artist as discussed in this thesis and have been included in the tables of names in Appendix One. The differences between the careers of Gabain and Fawkes are therefore interesting. They are indicative of the variety of ways women could become involved in poster art during the early twentieth century and reveal the multiple roles and occupations encompassed by the term 'woman poster artist'. In this first chapter I will consider these different approaches to poster art in more detail and use case studies of women artists to identify the five main 'types' of poster artist that existed between 1900 and 1939. In the process of doing so I will also answer basic but essential research questions, which will offer the foundation for my analysis in the coming chapters. These questions include Who were the women involved in poster art? How did they enter the industry? and What type of work did they do?

Considering the range of ways in which women produced poster art is important for several reasons. Doing so allows us to understand the complexities of the poster art industry and reveals the hard work and effort that went into gaining and maintaining a career in this field. Acknowledging different types of work also prevents the positioning of the women artists involved in poster art as 'homogenous categories of alterity', a perspective warned against by Marsha Meskimmon in her 2003 book *Women Making Art: History, Subjectivity, Aesthetics.*[6] In this chapter I hope to heed Meskimmon's warnings and provide nuance to the idea of the woman poster artist; at once acknowledging the large number of women who were part of this group whilst simultaneously noting the uniqueness of their experiences. In line with this, the five types of poster artist identified in this chapter are intended to be broad categorisations which aid understanding of the industry's structure, but do not represent all experiences. Similarly, the women selected for these case studies are by no means the most important artists working in poster art. Instead, they have been selected for the substantial

[6] Marsha Meskimmon, *Women Making Art: History, Subjectivity, Aesthetics*, New York, 2003, 3.

information available on their lives and careers, which allows them to be used as paradigms of the 'types' of artist discussed.

The Full-Time Poster Artist

Arguably the most prominent type of poster artists working in the early twentieth century were those who I have termed full-time artists, who focused their attention consistently (although not necessarily exclusively) on the production of poster art. These artists typically produced multiple poster designs per year and concentrated on this work over other art forms. Typically, they worked across companies — often producing posters for multiple campaigns concurrently — and developed a unique style, which was appealing to commissioners and recognisable to the public. Many of the most well-known poster artists fall into this category, with names from both genders standing out. These include Tom Purvis, and Edward McKnight Kauffer as well as Margaret Calkin James, Herry Perry, and Freda Beard.

Perhaps the most prominent woman artist to fall into the category of full-time poster artist is Dora Batty, who rose to success during the early 1920s and produced over sixty poster designs during the following twenty years. Batty's career history provides a clear indication of the success available to full-time poster artists and offers an ideal case study through which to understand the meaning and significance of this type of worker. Despite Batty's impressive and longstanding career in poster art however, at present scholarship has not afforded her with the credit she deserves. As with all women poster artists Batty has been relegated to footnotes and generalisations within many texts and these fail to encapsulate the impact of her work. Even when acknowledgements of her significance do exist — such as David Bownes' claim that she was 'one of the most prolific, versatile and creative designers of her generation' — these have done little to raise Batty's profile and her contribution to

poster art remains largely unknown.[7] Moreover, accounts of Batty's career almost always begin with the caveat that 'little is known of Dora's background and training'.[8] Such a claim fails to situate Batty's success as a product of hard work and instead follows perspectives often seen in writing on women artists, in which success is presented as random, surprising, or without precedent.

Despite secondary literature stressing the lack of information on Batty's early life a study of local papers and census data reveals this not to be the case. Batty was born in Colchester, Essex on the 12th January 1891 and was the youngest of three daughters born to Elizabeth Cooke Hopwood and Reverend Thomas Batty, who was the pastor at Stockwell Congregational Church in Colchester. [9] Thomas' work ensured the family enjoyed a middle-class lifestyle and that his daughters received an academic and religious education well into their teens, attending the local school and Sunday school.[10] Even following Thomas' death in 1909 the family's middle-class status continued, allowing Batty to enter Chelmsford School of Science and Art around 1910 (the same school attended by Fawkes).[11] Here Batty's talent in art became apparent and was reported in the local press.[12] For example, in 1913 the *Chelmsford Chronicle* reported that Batty was one of only forty-three students across the country to pass the Board's exam for 'drawing' and the only candidate from Essex to do so.[13]

Presumably because of her achievements while at Chelmsford, Batty was able to secure a place at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in around 1915. Founded by the London County Council under the tutelage of headmaster William Lethaby (1857 – 1931), Central was a leading art school which aimed to prepare its students for professional art and

[7] David Bownes, *Poster Girls*, Exhibition Catalogue, London Transport Museum, 2017-2018, London, 2018, 42.
[8] Ruth Artmonsky, *Designing Women: Women Working in Advertising and Publicity from the 1920s to the 1960s*, London, 2012, 117.
[9] 1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[10] Anon., 'Sunday Services at Colchester' *Essex Standard*, 5th May 1900, 8.
[11] 1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[12] Anon., 'Chelmsford School of Art', *Essex Newsman,* 3rd August 1912, 4; Anon., 'Art Students Work', *Essex Newsman*, 2nd August 1913, 4.
[13] Anon., 'Chelmsford Art Students Success', *Chelmsford Chronicle*, September 1913, 3.

design work.[14] The school offered classes in a variety of applied art arenas, including silversmithing, book binding, and stained-glass production, as well as fine-art classes in drawing, sculpture, and architecture.[15] Its teaching methods were unusual for the era. While other schools, such as the Royal College of Art, pushed their students to specialise in a particular artistic practice during their studies, Central encouraged its students to study a breadth of courses in different fields.[16] For example, during her time at Central in 1925, the future poster artist Eileen Mayo (1906 – 1994) took evening classes in at least five subjects: wood engraving for illustration, calligraphy, drawing, lithography, and historical costume design.[17]

According to Joanne Selbourne, Central's broader approach to teaching 'gave students a head-start over their contemporaries at other schools' when they entered the job market. [18] This was because cross-disciplinary teaching acknowledged the multiplicity of skills required by the successful artist. A broader teaching approach was especially helpful in training poster artists, who were expected to possess a multiplicity of skills in order to achieve success. The artist and writer W.G Raffé noted this need for variety in a talk he gave on entering poster art.[19] Raffé stated that poster artists had

> to learn at least four phases of technology: those of art, in drawing and design; those of process reproduction by a variety of methods; those of printing and those of advertising. (If he adds a little knowledge of accounting, of economics and of journalism he will become even more efficient.) [20]

[14] 'Central School of Arts and Crafts', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/organization.php?id=msib2_121, (accessed June 2019).
[15] Ibid.
[16] Mary Schoser, 'Following the thread: Textiles', *Making their mark. Art, craft, and design at the Central school, 1896-1966*, Sylvia Backemeyer (ed), London, 2000, 46 – 57, 47.
[17] Margaret Jillian Cassidy, 'Shifting boundaries: the art of Eileen Mayo', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2000, vii.
[18] Joanna Selborne, 'Making an Impression', Sylvia Backemeyer (ed), *Making their mark. Art, craft, and design at the Central school, 1896-1966,* London, 2000, 18 - 32, 26.
[19] W G Raffé, 'Training for Advertising and Commercial Art', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 79:4086, 1931, 397-415.
[20] Ibid, 405.

Leonard Richmond also stressed the variety of skills a poster artist required in his 1931 book *The Technique of the Poster*.[21] These included fine draftsmanship, knowledge of tone, and versatility.[22]

Batty arrived at Central at a time when opportunities for women artists were rapidly increasing. Having merged with the Royal Female School of Art in 1908, mass female attendance was encouraged by Central's progressive attitude towards women's education.[23] The school allowed women to study alongside their male contemporaries in almost all classes, thereby offering them the opportunity to train in traditionally 'masculine' artforms.[24] It can be assumed that these equal opportunities are the reason that at least twenty-six of the artists discussed in this thesis studied at Central during their careers. Batty's time at Central coincided with those of future poster artists Calkin James, Freda Lingstrom and Dorothy Hutton (1889 – 1984). Meanwhile, others such as Betty Swanwick, (1915 – 1989) Eileen Seyd and Mary Kessell (1914 – 1977) would study at Central during the later 1920s.[25]

A woodblock print produced by Perry (herself a student at Central) demonstrates the school's liberal attitudes to gender (fig. 3). The print depicts a cross section of Central's main building on Southampton Row and features each discipline in its own separate classroom, a layout which resembles that utilised by the school during the 1910s and 1920s.[26] Perry depicts feminine figures in almost all the departments and shows them working alongside masculine figures. A particularly notable example of this is in the furniture making department where a feminine figure is depicted at a work bench wielding a heavy tool.

[21] Leonard Richmond, *The Technique of the Poster*, London, 1933, v.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Sylvia Backemeyer (ed), *Making their mark. Art, craft, and design at the Central school, 1896-1966*, London, 2000, 11.
[24] Ibid. It is important to note that despite Central's progressive attitude female students were initially prevented from participating in classes such as silversmithing due to trade union restrictions on this industry.
[25] Ruth Sykes, 'The central School and the Poster Girls', *Poster Girls,* David Bownes (ed), Exhibition Catalogue, London Transport Museum 2017-2018, London, 89-91.
[26] Anon., 'Central School of arts and crafts', *British Architect*, 1911, 203-204.

Perry's print also hints at the large numbers of women students at Central during this time. At the bottom of her image in the section marked 'basement' Perry depicts two rooms labelled 'men' and 'women' presumably intended to signify the 'separate common rooms for men and women' that existed during this time.[27] The large number of feminine figures present in the women's room (eight as opposed to one masculine figure in the men's room) can therefore be understood as a reference by Perry to the large number of women in attendance at the school.

It seems likely that her time at Central acted as the stimulus for Batty's career in poster art. The school's former headmaster, Lethaby, was a leading member of the Design and Industries Association (DIA) a group set up to promote the advancement of art in industrial contexts.[28] Before his retirement from Central, Lethaby had established several networks and associations between the school and leading figures in the world of design. These included connections to London Transport's publicity officer Frank Pick, who commissioned a number of Central's students to produce poster designs for the company while they were still at school.[29] The students selected by Pick were treated equivalently to full-time professional artists and paid a fee for their design.[30] These commissions were therefore a significant opportunity for those still learning their trade, offering many the chance to enter the world of work for the first time.

Batty's early poster commissions seem to have stemmed from Central's DIA connections. Her first poster, *Travel with the children to the plays and pantomimes* (1921) (fig. 4) was commissioned by London Transport either during or shortly after her time at the school (concrete dates of Batty's attendance are unclear). Printed in a double-royal format this poster advertised the benefits of traveling by the Underground to the theatre and featured

[27] Judith E Hughes, 'Reminiscences of a Cabinet Maker', *Women Designing : Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars*, Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden (ed), Exhibition Catalogue, University of Brighton Gallery, March 1994, Brighton, 1994, 16-19, 17.
[28] Raymond Plummer, *DIA nothing need be ugly,* http://www.dia.org.uk/page/aboutus/nothing_Need_be_Ugly/DIA_Nothing_Need_Be_Ugly_Chapter_4_-_The_First_Yearbooks_and_the_Early_Twenties (accessed June 2019); Anon. 'Central School', *British Architect,* 203.
[29] LT 606/011, Minutes of Vice Chairman's publicity meeting, 15th October 1937.
[30] Ibid.

an image created by Batty above text describing the 'speed', 'comfort', and 'convenience' offered by this method of transport. While elements of this poster appear to anticipate Batty's later style — including the use of blank space to delineate lighter parts of an image — much of the *Pantomime* poster is markedly different to Batty's later work and indicates her adherence and reliance on skills learned at Central. The depiction of a grey shadow on the back of the stage and the long limbs of the figure on the right, border on the grotesque and evoke a sense of repulsion not seen in Batty's later posters. Moreover, the monochrome colour palette, featuring just three shades of grey, differs to Batty's later use of colour, which was frequently praised in reviews of her poster art.[31] These differences suggest that *Travel with Children* may be an insight into the skills Batty learned at Central, predating the development of her own unique artistic style.

Batty would go on to produce around fifty posters for London Transport, producing at least one poster a year between 1924 and 1936. Throughout this time, she developed a close working relationship with Pick and the company.[32] This close relationship can be seen in correspondence. A letter from 1930 used informal language to ask Batty to 'come along and look at it [a printed version of a poster] in the course of the next day or two'.[33] The relaxed timeframe 'the next day or two' indicates that Batty was frequently visiting the Underground headquarters during this period as part of her work.[34] Batty also developed other working relationships. In 1923 the Victoria and Albert Museum commissioned her to produce a poster for their upcoming exhibition 'Of Old Students of The Royal College of Art'. Meanwhile during the 1920s Batty produced a series of posters for Macfisheries, a leading chain of fishmongers. In 1931 Clarks shoes employed Batty to produce posters for their company, and in 1934 the Great Western Railway (GWR) commissioned Batty to make a poster advertising

[31] W.H.B 'Achtergronden van de reclame' *Revue der Reclame*, August 1949, 204.
[32] Artmonsky, *Designing Women*, 119.
[33] 2006/14933, Letter from the Assistant Publicity Manager to Dora Batty about alterations for designs for Season Ticket and Cheap travel posters, 29th January 1930, LTM.
[34] Ibid.

The Flower Harvest in Cornwall and The Scillies as well as one advertising *Historic Bath* in 1935.

The EMB also employed Batty to produce several designs during the late 1920s paying her between five and twenty guineas for decorative work and typography panels.[35] Again, these commissions are likely to have been related to Batty's relationship with Pick. Pick sat on the EMB publicity sub-committee and recommended the names of artists for this campaign. In fact, almost all the women artists used by the EMB were also working for London Transport. For this reason, many scholars have credited Pick with the emergence of women poster artists during this period, suggesting that his willingness to promote women artists provided a catalyst for the wider employment of women.[36] However, whilst Pick certainly played a role in promoting women artists, such accounts are largely exaggerated in line with a desire to promote Pick as a cult figure at the head of poster design. As will be demonstrated in Chapter Two, the connections between women artists and poster design ran far deeper than Pick's involvement and bypassed the influence of any one individual or group.

In addition to smaller pieces of work, the EMB gave Batty a major commission in 1928, when they asked her to replace A. E. Taylor (dates unknown) as the artist responsible for a series of posters titled the 'March of the Empire'.[37] Intended to advertise trade links between Britain and Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa, this series required Batty to produce infographics and maps to represent the EMB's work. Although Batty never finished this commission — the final set was cancelled in a meeting on the 19th of September 1928 — the Empire March series represents one of the most substantial commissions of her career.[38] It pertained to three maps printed as double royal posters, three or four infographic

[35] CO 760/26, Publicity Committee, Poster Section.
[36] Teri J. Edelstein, 'Graphic Opportunities Women artists and the Underground', *Art for All,* Exhibition Catalogue*,* New Haven Connecticut, *Yale Arts Centre,* June-August 2010, Connecticut*,* 2010, 105-126, 113.
[37] CO 760/26, Publicity Committee, Poster Section, 30th August 1928.
[38] CO 760/26, Publicity Committee, Poster Section, 19th September 1928.

double royal images, the decorations for a series of photographic posters and another eight smaller 40 x 60 designs.[39] Beyond its significant scale the Empire March series also provides insight into the equal opportunities poster art offered to artists. Batty's employment to replace a male artist suggests that gender was not considered when commissioning a work, an idea which will also be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two. This commission, and many others, also reveals the equal pay in place for women artists, with companies typically offering a flat rate fee regardless of gender.[40]

Batty's success as a poster artist and her gaining of notable commissions was most likely assisted by her agent, the former poster artist R. P. Gossop.[41] Gossop represented over thirty artists during this period, including well-known figures Horace Taylor, Thomas Derrick, and McKnight Kauffer, a fact which has led Ruth Artmonsky to argue that he 'was one of the most important agents in the inter-war years'.[42] Gossop's agreement to take on Batty is therefore notable and suggests that her work was considered on a par with artists more frequently discussed in poster scholarship. It also demonstrates Batty's own commitment to her professional career. Agents helped an artist to gain commissions by developing contacts with a variety of companies, organising business negotiations and contracts, and promoting the artists they represented through adverts in the press.[43] This assistance allowed the artist to be 'employed producing pictures' rather than selling their posters and reduced administrative aspects of their workload.[44] However, it also led to a loss of profit for an artist. An agent typically took between fifteen and twenty per cent of the amount earned from a commission. [45] Batty's decision to be represented by Gossop is

[39] CO 760/26, Publicity Committee, Poster Section, 1st November 1928.
[40] Anon., 'Equal Pay and its logical Consequences', *The Graphic*, 7th February 1920, 195.
[41] AAD/1998/15/50, R P Gossop Cash Book, 1923-1936.
[42] Ruth Artmonsky, *Unashamed Artists: A Celebratory Miscellany on Advertising Art*, London, 2014, 31; AAD/1998/15/51: List of Artists.
[43] Anon., 'Art buyers Interpreter', *Commercial Art,* July 1938, 20.
[44] Percy Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, London, 1925, 195.
[45] Lilian Hocknell, 'Commercial Art' in Margaret Cole, (ed), *The Road to Success: Twenty Essays On the Choice of a Career for Women*, 1936, London, 186 – 194, 186.

therefore evidence of her commitment to a long-term career in poster art in which a loss of immediate funds would be counterbalanced by consistent and continued commissions.

Turning to accounts of Batty's posters in the press and trade journals, it becomes possible to identify some of her most successful works. Batty's 1925 campaign for London Transport appears to have received considerable praise and was partially reproduced in the 1926 edition of the Modern Publicity annual *Posters and Publicity*.[46] Known collectively as the 'From Country to Town' appeal, this campaign featured three separate double royal posters which advertised the Underground's potential for *Shopping*, trips to *Theatres and Dances*, as well as travel into the countryside for *Picnics and Rambles* (figs. 5 - 7). These designs were perhaps the first of Batty's posters to feature her unique style, focusing on the colour and pattern of the figures' outfits. *Shopping*, (fig. 5) for example, centres around a single young feminine figure that stands in front of a department store (presumably Harrods given the dome on the right). Clutching a set of parcels, the figure is wearing a fashionable outfit of a loose-fitting tunic whose geometric pattern is in keeping with the popular art deco style of the 1920s. The figure's fashionably bobbed hair is covered by a cloche hat which matches the heavy scarf wrapped around its neck. This attention to the latest fashions can be seen throughout Batty's oeuvre and is perhaps one reason for her popularity as an artist. Up-to date fashions would have afforded Batty's posters a modern appearance, which was likely to attract attention and emphasise the innovative nature of a campaign.

In evidence of their popularity Batty's 'Town to Country' posters were included in several exhibitions and reviews. The critic Sydney Jones stated that

> Quite a fresh note has been contributed to the famous London Underground Railway posters by Miss D. M Batty, whose subjects for "Shopping" and

[46] Sydney R Jones, *Posters and Publicity*, London 1926.

> "Theatres and Dances," both very personal in manner and drawn with sureness and decorative feeling, raise the hope that more may follow on similar lines. [47]

Shopping was also displayed at the British and Foreign Posters Exhibition, held at the V&A in 1931.[48] This exhibition, which was the first of its kind to be held by the museum, helped to validate the artistic status of poster art. The inclusion of *Shopping* alongside two other posters by Batty demonstrates her significant position in the poster world, as well as the artistic value attributed to her art. These ideas are reinforced by reviews of the event, with *The Times* mentioning Batty among a list of artists whose posters 'could not be equalled anywhere else in the world'.[49]

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s Batty supplemented her career in poster design with other work. Like most poster artists, Batty used her talents to create other forms of commercial art, including designs for folders, press adverts, and chocolate boxes. She also worked for Poole pottery, producing imagery of nursery rhymes which could be painted onto plates and cups.[50] In addition to this practical work Batty took up teaching, leading courses in drawing, commercial art, and later textiles. Although appearing contradictory to a full-time career as a poster artist, teaching was a common practice for both men and women poster designers. Artistic success and teaching were perceived by many to be mutually beneficial, as artistic practices were believed to improve a person's ability to teach, while a teaching post was seen to validate their artistic status and skill.[51] Thus, almost all poster artists conducted some form of teaching practice during their career, for example McKnight Kauffer, Austin

[47] Ibid, 6.
[48] *British and Foreign Posters,* Exhibition Catalogue, London, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1931.
[49] Anon., 'British and Foreign Posters', *The Times,* 22nd June 1931, 17.
[50] Anon., 'Women Apply Art to Industry', *Gloucester Citizen*, 16th January 1935, 7.
[51] Joanne Heath, 'Review of Review of Women Artists between the Wars: "A Fair Field and No Favour," "Women Artists in Interwar France: Framing Femininities," by Katy Deepwell and Paula J. Birnbaum', *Woman's Art Journal*, 33:2, 2012, 55–57.

Cooper (1890 – 1964), and Eric Fraser (1902 – 1983) all taught commercial art at the London branch of the Reimann school during the 1920s and 1930s.[52]

Batty's teaching work began in 1928 when she taught a course in 'Drawing and Design' alongside fellow poster artists F. C. Herrick (1887 – 1970) and Fawkes.[53] Taught at the Sir John Cass Technical Institute, this course would continue until at least 1939, by which point it was advertised as a course in 'commercial art'.[54] Batty also returned to Central in 1932, teaching in the school's textile department.[55] It remains unclear as to why Batty was hired for this role. There is no evidence of her working in textile design until the late 1930s, when she began submitting printed designs to Helios under the guidance of Marianne Straub.[56] However, it is possible that Batty did complete work in the field of textiles prior to her appointment and that this work has simply been lost. The unattributed nature of fabric design makes such works harder to trace than poster art, an issue which is exacerbated by the textile creator's reputation as a designer or crafts(wo)man rather than an artist, leading their individual contributions to go unnoticed. On the other hand, Batty's use of fashion in her poster designs (such as *Shopping*) may also have influenced her appointment to this role, as it demonstrated her interest in clothing and textiles and knowledge of up-to date styles.

Regardless of the reasons for her appointment Batty's success as a teacher was so notable that in 1950, she became head of the textiles department, a position she would hold until her retirement in 1958.[57] During this time Batty taught hundreds of students, many of whom would go on to experience their own artistic success.[58] These pupils included the designer Terrance Conran, who described Batty in his memoir.[59] Conran recalled that

[52] Reimann School Advert, *Commercial Art,* March 1937, v.
[53] Advert for Sir John Cass Institute, *Commercial Art*, September 1929, XI.
[54] Advert for Sir John Cass School, *Commercial Art,* September 1939, VI.
[55] Schoser, 'Following the Thread' 52.
[56] Lesley Jackson, *Twentieth-Century Pattern Design*, Princeton, 2007, 85.
[57] Schoser 'Following the Thread', 52.
[58] Ibid.
[59] Terence Conran, *Terence Conran: My Life in Design*, London, 2016, 26.

> Dora Batty was very strict but she ran the course superbly. She saw that her students really had something to do at every moment they were there... One of the most fascinating things she arranged was a twice a week behind the scenes visit to the historic textiles collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington… [she also] brought in a whole raft of young designers and artists to broaden our horizons and inspire us.[60]

However, while part-time teaching was in keeping with a career in poster art, Batty's increased involvement at Central during the 1940s and 1950s is also evidence of her diminishing poster career after WW2. Batty's work in poster design seems to have decreased dramatically after 1939 and in this way follows the wider fall in the production of poster art during the 1940s. The lower demand for all poster artists appears to have affected women artists most significantly, with many women never resuming their poster careers after the war. While Batty continued her artistic practices through teaching and the production of textiles until shortly before her death in 1966, other artists adopted different approaches by entering alternative fields of art or else retiring from the art world altogether. As a result, when taken as a whole, Batty's career epitomises the experiences of many women artists who specialised in poster design, while her shifting focus charts the rise and fall of the poster as an art form.

THE PART-TIME POSTER ARTIST

While artists such as Batty dedicated their artistic career to the production of poster art, such a singular focus was not the only way in which women participated in poster production. For many women poster art formed one facet of a more varied career, as they combined the

[60] Ibid.

production of poster design with more traditional fine-art projects. These individuals, who I will refer to as part-time poster artists, included the male artist Frank Brangwyn (1867 – 1956) and women artists Clodagh Sparrow (1905 – 1957) and Mary Adshead (1904 – 1995), all of whom produced posters whilst also successfully exhibiting and selling paintings. However, such a practice was met with suspicion by some in the poster art industry, who wished to preserve the boundaries between fine and commercial art — probably in an attempt to ensure their own continued dominance in the latter. For example, Purvis and W S Rogers both claimed poster artists required skills not held by painters or fine-art artists, while McKnight Kauffer asserted that 'undeniably the art of the poster is quite different from the art of painting' making it hard for fine-art artists to gain success in poster work.[61]

Despite the concerns of those in the poster industry, many men and women did successfully combine their work in these fields and produced poster art on part-time basis. In addition to the names listed above, Anna Zinkeisen was one of the most successful artists to do this, forging a notable reputation in both poster art and fine art. Zinkeisen also countered those who argued for boundaries between the two practices by noting the connections between the two worlds. In 1926 she asserted

> you can't cast aside your great ambition and your dreams of pure art because you work in an economic and competitive commercial world as well. The idea that the two are incompatible is all wrong.[62]

It is Zinkeisen's self-awareness and understanding of her dual position which makes her the ideal case study for exploring the part-time poster artist. Moreover, as one of the most widely

[61] Tom Purvis, 'Commercial Art', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 77: 3990, May 10th, 1929, 649-664; W S Rogers, 'The modern poster its essentials and significance', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 62:3192, January 23 1914, 186-195; Edward Mcknight Kauffer *The Art of the Poster It's origin Evolution and Purpose*, London 1924, IX.
[62] Anna Zinkeisen, 'The Artistic Profession',, Margaret Cole (ed), *The Road to Success: Twenty Essays On the Choice of a Career for Women*, 1936, London, 175 – 185, 184.

written about women poster artists, Zinkeisen's career and biography are easy to reconstruct, and thus provide a valuable comparison to Batty. In the years since her death in 1976 Zinkeisen has been the subject of three monographic books — a tribute published in 1978 and two joint posthumous biographies with her sister Doris (who also worked in both fine art and poster art) published in 2008 and 2021.[63] In addition to these accounts Zinkeisen's work has also been used to explore the relationship between women and applied art by scholars such as Britta C Dwyer.[64] This greater interest in Zinkeisen is representative of the contrast in approaches to fine and commercial art within art history, as it would seem that Zinkeisen's status as a fine-art artist has led to a greater interest being paid to her career than that of full-time poster artists.

Zinkeisen was born to Clare Bolton-Charles and Victor Zinkeisen in Kilcreggan Scotland in 1901.[65] She was the second child and younger sister of Doris Zinkeisen who had been born three years earlier in 1898.[66] As a result of their father's successful business as a timber merchant both girls were educated at home by a tutor, through whom they received a basic academic education. Reportedly both girls showed an early aptitude for art and 'wanted to draw and paint to the exclusion of all other academic pursuits'.[67] In 1909 the family moved to Middlesex where both daughters were able to pursue their artistic desires at Harrow School of Art.[68] Anna was just eight years old.

Following on from their success at Harrow, in 1917 both Zinkeisen sisters gained scholarships to the Royal Academy (RA) in London. While Central was famed for its emphasis on the applied arts and the application of art to industry; the RA focused on the fine

[63] Philip Kelleway, Emma Roodhouse, and Nicola Evans, *The Art of Doris and Anna Zinkeisen*, London 2021; Philip Kelleway, *Highly Desirable: The Zinkeisen Sisters & Their Legacy,* London, 2016; Josephine Walpole, *Anna: A Memorial Tribute to Anna Zinkeisen,* London, 1978.
[64] Britta C Dwyer, 'Negotiating "New" venues in art: Doris and Anna Zinkeisen in modernising London' Karen Brown (ed), *Women's Contributions to Visual Culture, 1918-1939*, Aldershot, 2008, 117-138.
[65] Britta C Dwyer, *The Biographical Dictionary of Scottish Women*, Edinburgh, 2017.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Dwyer, 'Negotiating "New,"' 118.
[68] Ibid.

arts and followed a curriculum which had remained virtually unchanged for 150 years. As a result, while at the RA the Zinkeisen sisters received an extensive schooling in painting which focused on the production of portraits and history painting, despite the 'fluctuating demand' for the latter in the professional world.[69] Although well suited to artists working as exhibition painters, such an approach was arguably less suitable for preparing students for a career in poster art as it did not teach many of the skills deemed necessary for this work. Despite this, at least seven future women poster artists attended the RA. These included Audrey Weber (1891 – 1950) and Antonia Yeoman (1907 – 1970) both of whom went on to juggle fine and commercial artistic careers.

As well as being a student at the RA, in 1921 Zinkeisen exhibited her first paintings at the RA summer exhibition (an oil painting entitled *Ivan* and a watercolour entitled *The Golden Age).*[70] This exhibition drew particular attention in the press due to the number of women artists participating in it and Zinkeisen was singled out alongside seven other women for her role in disrupting the academy's structures.[71] *The Sunday Herald's* response to the event was particularly notable.[72] The paper ran an article in which it accused the artists of committing 'crimes' against the art world by taking the place of more distinguished (and presumably male) painters.[73] Although largely negative this criticism did raise Zinkeisen's profile at a pivotal point in her career. It also failed to dissuade the academy from exhibiting her work in the future and Zinkeisen would go on to exhibit at eleven more summer exhibitions before 1939.[74] At least forty-two other women poster artists also exhibited art in the RA's summer exhibitions, a fact which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter

[69] Emma Chambers, 'Redefining History Painting in the Academy: The Summer Composition competition at the Slade', *Visual Culture in Britain,* 2005, 6:1, 79 – 100, 79.
[70] *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy*, Exhibition Catalogue, 1921.
[71] Barbara Browning, 'These Young Academisses', *Sunday Express*, 8th May 1921, n/p.
[72] Anon., 'Royal Academy', *Sunday Herald*, 8th May 1921, n/p.
[73] Ibid.
[74] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogues*, 1921-1939.

Three.[75] Participation in such events proves these women's commitment to fine as well as poster art and demonstrates the potential to pursue a career in both fields.

Alongside her work in fine art, in the 1920s Zinkeisen also became involved in applied art. In 1925 she won a silver medal at the *Exposition Internationale des arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts) in Paris for two plaques she had created for the Wedgewood company.[76] According to *Commercial Art* the commission of these plaques was an 'unheard of honour' and evidence of Zinkeisen's considerable artistic talent.[77] Around this time Zinkeisen also entered into the production of poster art, creating designs for companies such as Thames Valley, Schweppes and the LNER. Then in the 1930s she was identified by Pick and began work on London Transport posters, producing at least twenty-one posters in ten years.

Zinkeisen used a variety of styles in her poster art, varying her artistic approach to suit her commission. For example, in a poster produced for the LNER in 1933 Zinkeisen used a painterly style to depict the Valley Gardens at Harrogate, creating an image in which a group of figures are shown walking through the garden on a summer's day (fig. 8). The resultant poster, *Harrogate,* is highly detailed and depicts each figure participating in a different activity. This was in keeping with the work's purpose as a railway poster, which was typically displayed on a station platform where viewers could look at it at close proximity for extended periods of time.[78] A writer for *Answers* magazine described this viewing method. They noted that those waiting for a train, 'study the posters intently... apprehending every detail of their pictorial illustrations' and therefore favour more complex poster designs.[79]

[75] Ibid.
[76] R.B, 'Artists who help the Advertiser: no. 25: The Zinkeisen Sisters', *Commercial Art,* August 1925, 189-191.
[77] Ibid, 190.
[78] Beverly Cole and Richard Durack, *Railway Posters 1923-1947: From the Collection of the National Railway Museum, York*, York 1992, 20.
[79] Anon., 'A Hopeless Dawn', *Answers*, 65:20, 1920, 463

In line with this, *Harrogate* is highly detailed. To the left of the poster a fashionably dressed couple stand as if in conversation with one another while the figure of a dog waits patiently by the feminine figure's side. Meanwhile, on the right two other couples can be seen walking through the park in opposite directions. One couple (who are shown front on) are wearing summer sports clothes and carrying tennis rackets while the other couple (shown from behind) wear overcoats and carry an umbrella and golf clubs. The juxtaposition of the image is extended by Zinkeisen's depiction of two feminine figures at the centre of the image who are depicted wearing the same black outfit. The sombre faces of these figures and the fact that they appear almost identical to one another adds an odd and slightly sinister undertone to the scene, keeping a viewer's attention.

Although produced just one year after Harrogate, Zinkeisen's 1934 poster *Richmond Horse Show* (fig. 9) has a distinctly different appearance and is produced using a much simpler style. Again, this style is in keeping with the poster's purpose and indicates Zinkeisen's ability to vary her style dependent on the commission. As a London Transport Poster this work would most likely have been shown on an underground train or on station walls where it would have been viewed quickly by passers-by. The poster therefore needed to put across its message quickly to a figure known as 'the man on the run' who did not have time to look at a work in detail.[80] In order to follow these demands *Richmond* appears in a graphic style. The poster focuses on a rider on horseback, which is depicted using a black outline and single block colours that make the image stand out against the blank background. Meanwhile, the horse's legs are used to frame the figures of two spectators, a technique which creates a sense of perspective despite the simplistic imagery.

The colour palette used in *Richmond* also demonstrates Zinkeisen's understanding of poster art as a unique medium with specific requirements and demands. Despite featuring

[80] Tom Purvis, 'Various Views on Poster Technique', in Leonard Richmond, *The Technique of the Poster*, London 1933, 131.

thirteen colours (black, pale grey, dark blue, turquoise, light blue, green, pink, peach, three shades of brown, yellow, and dark yellow) *Richmond* was most likely produced using just five ink colours (black, pale grey, turquoise, pink, and yellow) which were mixed to produce different shades. For example, the light blue used in the sky was likely produced by printing a layer of grey ink — seen in the figures' suits — on top of a layer of turquoise ink — seen at the bottom of the image — while the trees below were likely a result of the yellow — seen on the rider's glove — being printed on top of the same turquoise (fig. 10). Limiting the number of inks used to produce a poster significantly reduced production costs as it decreased the number of print runs needed to produce each design.[81] This decrease in costs was so significant that artists who were able to reduce their ink in this way were often favoured, perhaps explaining Zinkeisen's continued employment in this field.[82]

As with Batty, the significance of Zinkeisen's work in poster art can be traced in press reports. Living near Regent's Park in London, Zinkeisen became a popular member of the capital's social and artistic scene and was often reported on in articles and gossip columns.[83] Many of these accounts stressed that Zinkeisen excelled in art 'particularly as a poster artist', even when an article was focused on her work in another field such as portraiture, easel painting or mural design.[84] The continued description of Zinkeisen as a 'poster artist' despite her work across media indicates the value placed on her poster work by members of the public who were able to recognise her poster campaigns. It also provides insight into the significant status the poster held as an artistic object during this period, a status which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Zinkeisen's achievements were also discussed in the world of poster art. Along with her sister she was included in *Commercial Art* magazine's series of articles on 'Artists who Help the Advertiser', in which their success as commercial

[81] Cyril Sheldon, 'The Cost of Poster Advertising', *Commercial Art,* July 1925, 178.
[82] Percy W Rayner, 'Commercial Lettering, in Leonard Richmond', *The Technique of the Poster*, London 1933, 33.
[83] Both sisters are discussed in Miss Sketch, 'Miss Sketch Keeps a Diary', *The Sketch,* 9th November 1938, 262.
[84] See for example: Anon., 'Decorating the Queen Mary', *The Sphere,* 27th July 1935, 145; Anon., 'Anna Zinkeisen and Her Boxers', *The Bystander,* 9th August 1939, 198; Anon., 'Art as Trade', *Eve,* 30th June 1926, 734.

artists was celebrated.[85] In addition to this Zinkeisen's posters also appeared in poster exhibitions, including the LNER exhibitions of 1932 and 1937, where they were again singled out by writers in *Commercial Art* as a 'sophisticated piece of pageantry'.[86]

Zinkeisen herself commented on her work in poster art and its significance to her wider artistic career. Following her claims about the compatibility of 'pure art' and 'commercial' work (discussed at the beginning of this section) Zinkeisen continued to stress the benefit of pursuing both forms. Her views on the subject can be identified clearly in a chapter she wrote for Margaret Cole's 1936 book, *The Road to Success: Twenty Essays On the Choice of a Career for Women.*[87] Here Zinkeisen stated that 'personally I find that a wide range of different types of work provides the most effective safeguard against the besetting curse of staleness', a claim which effectively tied cross-medium practice to artistic development.[88] In line with this, innovation and changing styles can be seen across Zinkeisen's oeuvre. Already discussed in relation to her posters *Harrogate* and *Richmond* a variety of stylistic approaches can also be seen in Zinkeisen's fine-art production. Zinkeisen's portrait of the actress Diana Wynyard (fig. 11) (*Diana Wynyard* 1930s, Royal Shakespeare Theatre) was notably different to her more naturalistic paintings such as *The Dark Lady* (fig. 12) (1938, Nottingham Castle and Art Gallery) despite depicting a similar subject and being completed during the same decade.

Unlike Batty, Zinkeisen's poster art career continued to some extent after WW2 as she produced adverts for the United Steel Company during the 1940s.[89] These commissions, which she undertook following her work as a war artist between 1939 and 1945 made her one of the few women artists to have a career in poster art spanning both the 1930s and the 1940s. However, Zinkeisen's work in the field of poster art did eventually dry up and she was

[85] R.B, 'Artists who help', 190.
[86] Anon., 'The Twelfth Annual Exhibition of London and North Eastern Railway Posters', *Commercial Art*, June 1937, 241.
[87] Zinkeisen, 'Artistic Profession'.
[88] Ibid, 185.
[89] Kelleway, *Doris and Anna,* 100.

replaced by the graphic designers whose work characterised the posters of the 1950s and 1960s. Nevertheless, she continued to produce artwork until her death in 1976, combining work in applied art — illustrations and greetings cards — with the production of portraits of notable figures.

THE COMPETITION WINNER

For both Batty and Zinkeisen a career in poster art developed rapidly, with both rising to the top of the profession by their mid-thirties. This success was likely stimulated by the artists' attendance at leading art schools which, as already discussed, provided them with the exposure and contacts needed to gain commissions. However, attendance at a leading art college was not the only way into poster design and other avenues also offered artists the opportunity to promote their work and skills. One of the most notable of these opportunities was the poster competition, through which unknown or upcoming artists could submit their poster designs for potential publication and/or financial reward. Advertised in newspapers and trade journals these competitions offered aspiring artists a substantial opportunity and spawned a new type of poster artist — the competition winner.

The artist Daphne Barry is one of the many women who used poster competitions to forge a career in poster art and her journey to success provides an insight into these events. Born in Kent in 1906, Barry came from a family with close links to the art world.[90] Her uncle was the architect Sir Charles Barry, and she was a descendent of Sir Thomas Lawrence the fourth president of the Royal Academy.[91] Perhaps because of her artistic lineage Barry too showed an interest and ability for art. In the early 1920s she became a student at Battersea Polytechnic, whose art department offered a variety of courses including drawing, painting,

[90] 1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[91] Anon., 'Girl Art Student's Success', *Vote*, 2nd July 1926, n/p.

wood carving, and lace making.[92] Although smaller and less well known than Central or the RA, Battersea was well regarded in the world of commercial art. It also regularly ran adverts in trade journals to promote its day and night classes, making it a popular choice for aspiring commercial artists.[93]

It was during her time at Battersea that Barry began to enter poster competitions, most likely inspired by her fellow students who were achieving significant success at such events. The most notable of these competitions was the Competition of Industrial Design (CID) run by the Royal Society of Arts between 1924 and 1933.[94] The CID was split into six different fields —Architectural design, Textiles, Furniture, Book Production, Pottery and Glass, and Miscellaneous (later renamed Advertising in 1929) — with each category containing a number of sub-sections focused around different prizes.[95] These prizes were sponsored by companies, who specified the type of design sought, any requirements for its appearance, and also provided the money for each award. For example, in 1926 a prize sponsored by London Transport was listed thus:

> The Underground Group of Companies offer the following Prizes for designs of a Poster suitable for advertising 'Underground Railway Season Tickets'
>
> Two First Prizes of 10 Guineas each, one for the design showing the most original idea, the other for the design showing the best draughtsmanship and execution. The Judges may award the two First Prizes to one design

[92] London Diarist, 'By a London Diarist', *Birmingham Daily Gazette*, 25th June 1926, 6.
[93] Advert for Battersea Polytechnic, *Commercial Art*, March 1929, vi.
[94] 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 73:3795, August 1925, 876-897.
[95] Ibid; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1926', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 74:3849, August 1926, 914-943; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1927', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 75:3902, September 1927, 990-1014; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1928', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 77:3969, December 1928, 102-135; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1929', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 77:4015, November 1929, 1152-1189; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1930', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 78:4063, October 1930, 1150-1172; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1931', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 80:4124, December 1931, 69-80; 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design 1932', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 80:4162, August 1932, 966- 969.

Two Second Prizes of 5 Guineas each, on similar conditions.

The designs submitted to be 30ins [inches]. deep by 20 ins. wide, to be limited to four clear and flat colours, and to be free of all wording.

The awards will be subject to the under-mentioned conditions:

(a) The Judges shall be three in number, of whom two shall be appointed by the Royal Society of Arts and one by the Underground Companies.

(b) The prize-winning designs shall be the absolute property of the Underground Companies, with full rights of publication. The Companies, however, shall not be under any obligation to publish.[96]

Alongside prize money, the CID also offered publicity to its winners. Articles of the time reported on the value of this promotion describing how competitions, such as the CID, served 'a useful purpose in bringing to light works of promising young artists', so that 'those with ideas can make headway in spite of an overcrowded market'.[97] One way the CID offered this publicity was through an accompanying exhibition at the Imperial Institute, London.[98] This exhibition made the entered artworks visible to both members of the public and to members of the advertising world (such as advertising directors, agents, or printers) who could then commission the artists whose work they admired. The competition itself was also reported in the press, featuring in both trade journals and national newspapers. For example, *Commercial Art* ran articles on the event in its July editions of the journal, providing reviews

[96] 'Report on the Competition', 1926, 939.
[97] 'London Diarist', *Birmingham Daily Gazette*; Anon., 'Swiss National Exhibition Posters', *Commercial Art,* December 1938, 252.
[98] 'Report on the Competition', 1925, 877.

of the works selected.[99] Meanwhile the *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts* provided a full breakdown of the event, listing the names of prize winners and their schools, as well as information on the prizes they received.[100] These names were printed again in regional papers where localities reported on residents who had won prizes and often provided addresses of their studios. For example, the successes of Scottish artists were reported in *The Scotsman*, the success of Miss Mary Talbot Sanderson of the Sheffield College of Arts and Crafts was discussed in the *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, and Miss Adeline Mary Hone's success in poster art was commended in the *Leeds Mercury*. [101]

A further source of publicity came in the form of a Bureau of Information which was produced by the Royal Society to hold the names and contact details of artists who were commended for their work by the CID.[102] Following the event this listing was placed 'at the disposal of manufacturers', and acted as a register of artists looking for freelance work.[103] Because it was compiled by the CID judges — who were themselves leading and influential figures in advertising and design industries — inclusion of an artist's name in the bureau acted as an unofficial seal of legitimacy and could significantly help an artist's career. The esteem attached to such prizes meant that the competition attracted large numbers of entrants, rising from 553 candidates in 1924 to 1,690 in 1932.[104]

Barry entered the CID at least four times, submitting an entry to each competition between 1926 and 1929.[105] Alongside poster designs which she submitted in 1927 and 1928 she also submitted entries into other fields, including a design for a magazine cover in 1926

[99] For example: Shirley Waignwright, 'Royal Society of Arts Exhibition', *Commercial Art,* July 1926, 169-174. Anon., 'New Talent', *Commercial Art,* July 1928, 217- 220.
[100] 'Report on the Competition of Industrial Design', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, August 1925 -1932.
[101] Anon., 'Royal Society of Arts Competition Result', *The Scotsman*, 2nd August 1929, 10; Anon., 'Sheffield Student's Design Commended', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph,* 31st July 1931, 3; Anon., 'Yorkshire Woman's Poster Designs', *Leeds Mercury,* 5th February 1932, 8.
[102] Anon., 'The Royal Society of Arts Annual Competition', *Commercial Art,* July 1927, 232 -234; Anon., 'New Talent', *Commercial Art,* July 1928, 217.
[103] 'Report on the Competition'1928, 104.
[104] 'Report on the Competition', 1925, 876; 'Report on the Competition', 1932, 967.
[105] 'Report on the Competition', 1926, 938; 'Report on the Competition', 1927, 1012; 'Report on the Competition', 1928, 124 ;'Report on the Competition, 1187.

and one for a book jacket in 1928.[106] However, Barry's greatest success came in 1927 when she submitted two poster designs to the competition.[107] Of these, her 'design for a Poster depicting the easy access to the London Theatre by the Underground Railway', was 'highly commended' while her 'design for a Poster inviting passengers to do their shopping between the hours of 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.' received a second prize 'for draughtsmanship' of £5 5.s.[108] Interestingly, Barry was beaten to first prize in this competition by another women designer, Katie McDonald (dates unknown), who won £10 10.s for her design.[109] This joint female success provides some indication of the opportunities available to women artists in these competitions.

In addition to the CID, Barry also entered other competitions. These included a 1926 competition run by the London County Council (LCC) for a poster advertising their evening classes.[110] Barry's poster was selected as the winner of this competition, beating sixty-four other entries, a fact which was widely reported in press reports about the 'young artist's' success.[111] Although the poster Barry created for the LCC competition appears to no longer exist, a reproduction of it can be found in the 1928 edition of *Commercial Art* magazine (fig. 13). Here it accompanied an article by Raffé on 'The Elements of the Poster' and appeared alongside works by notable artists such as Cooper and E A Mason (dates unknown). [112]

The *Commercial Art* reproduction reveals that Barry's LCC poster featured a single candle on top of two books. The word knowledge circles the candle's flame as if radiating from the wick itself, presumably a reference to the traditional use of the candle as a symbol of enlightenment in art. This use of symbolism is notable because the poster itself is produced in a modern machine-inspired aesthetic, which was more associated with abstract imagery than

[106] Ibid.
[107] 'Report on the Competition', 1927, 1011-1012.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Anon., 'The Talk of London', *Sheffield Independent*, 25th June 1926, 6.
[111] Ibid.
[112] W G Raffé, 'The Elements of the Poster', *Commercial Art,* January 1928, 219-222, 221.

symbolic depictions. This modern style can be seen most clearly in the jagged lines which Barry has used to depict the radiating glow of the candle and which provide a stark contrast to the dark background. Barry's self-proclaimed interest in the Futurists can also be recognised in these lines, as they resemble the triangular shapes of C R W Nevinson's (1889 – 1946) *Bursting Shell,* (fig. 14) (Tate Britain, 1915).[113] Exhibited in London in 1915 and described in *The Observer* as 'Futurism pure and simple', Nevinson's painting was likely known to Barry, suggesting it may have been a source of inspiration when creating her poster.[114]

Barry won thirty pounds (equivalent to twenty eight guineas) for her LCC poster, a substantial amount of money for an artist still at college.[115] Such winnings would have paid for almost an entire year's tuition at a school like the Royal College of Art where course fees were thirty guineas for 'a complete session' or twelve guineas for a single term.[116] Thirty pounds was also in keeping with the prices paid to commissioned poster artists which, as noted in relation to Batty, did not vary in relation to an artists' gender. For example, London Transport listed a 'normal fee' for a double royal poster as thirty-five guineas during the 1930s while the GPO offered twenty guineas to 'young artists and beginners'.[117] These similarities between the fees paid to working poster artists and those received by competition winners are indicative of the opportunities competition entry offered to those starting out in poster production and validate my own understanding of these competition winners as artists in their own right.

Aside from her competition success Barry completed at least two more posters during the 1920s. One of these posters was produced for the LNER in 1927. Although no longer in

[113] Anon., 'Young Artists', *Sheffield Independent*, 25th June 1926, 6.
[114] Anon., 'Art and Artists: the London Group', *The Observer,* 28th November 1915, n/p.
[115] 'Student's Success', *Vote,* n/p.
[116] Anon,. 'Patronage and Artistic Identity, Royal College of Art, (including National Art Training School)' *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011, https://sculpture gla ac uk/view/organization php?id=msib4_1222355292 (accessed June 2019)
[117] LT 606/08: Minutes of Vice Chairman's Publicity Meeting, 24th October 1935; POST 33/5253, Poster Advisory Group 27th June 1934.

existence, this poster was described in detail by a critic writing for the *Daily Herald* who explained the 'very effective' way in which Barry had promoted season tickets for rail travel, through the depiction of 'a young couple with seasons strolling calmly into a station, while agitated crowds queue up to the booking office —and probably miss their trains'.[118] However, despite her initial success, there is no direct evidence of Barry's poster work continuing in the 1930s. A Daphne Barry did record herself as a 'commercial artist' in the 1939 register but, if she was still working in poster art, Barry was not producing signed poster designs after 1929.[119] One explanation for this is that Barry may instead have been working for a studio or agency following her time at Battersea. Such work brings us to the fourth type of poster artist discussed in this chapter, whose work was completed anonymously or under the name of a larger firm.

THE AGENCY WORKER

Thus far all of the women discussed in this chapter have worked independently as freelance artists, signing their posters and gaining personal recognition for their work. However, freelance work was not the only way of pursuing a career in poster art. In the 1936 book *The Road to Success: Twenty Essays on the Choice of a Career for Women*, the artist Lilian Hocknell (1891 – 1977) considered another way to forge a career. Hocknell suggested that, after leaving school, women should enter 'the studio of a good firm of printers or an advertising agency' where they could gain experience in producing poster art.[120] This career option was also discussed regularly in *Commercial Art.* In his column 'The Young Artist and Advertising' Reginald Murton suggested that whether to enter an advertising agency was the

[118] Anon., 'Posters to Make you Save', *Daily Herald*, 30th March 1927, 3.
[119] 1939 England and Wales Register.
[120] Hocknell, 'Commercial Art', 193.

biggest question facing the aspiring commercial artist, as their decision would shape the trajectory of their career.[121]

Despite the agency's significance to the world of poster art, writing a history of agency workers is considerably more difficult than writing about freelance artists. This is the result of a variety of factors. Firstly, identifying the names of those working in these spaces is virtually impossible. Agency workers rarely signed their poster art and this removes a key tool of artistic recognition. Instead, posters were attributed to the agency who employed the artist, and the name of this company was printed at the bottom of the work. Secondly, records of agencies have rarely been preserved in archives making it difficult to identify the names of those who worked for them. Even agency documents that were preserved are often owned by private collectors rather than libraries or museums and therefore are not accessible for research — as seen in the selling of the Curwen Agency archive in 2020 and 2021. Finally, the fact that some artists (such as Hocknell) began their work in agencies before moving on to a freelance career has led agency work to be viewed as a starting point, holding value only when discussed in relation to an artist's back story. Such a perspective has led to a dearth of scholarship on this subject, ignoring the substantial work undertaken by agency staff and the fact that a significant number of artists developed successful careers as agency workers.

As a result of the issues associated with researching agency work, I have not been able to identify a case study artist for this section in a manner comparable to those already discussed. Instead of focusing on a real artist such as Batty, Zinkeisen, or Barry, this section will therefore focus on a fictional figure — Miss A — who is the product of a number of sources amalgamated into the paradigm agency worker.[122] These sources include records completed by two advertising agency workers, respondent 39 and respondent 558, who wrote

[121] Reginald Murton, 'The Young Artist and Advertising', *Commercial Art*, July 1936, 29.
[122] I have used the title Miss rather than Mrs in recognition of the fact that many female poster artists remained unmarried – a fact discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.

reports for the Mass Observation Archive on their experiences working in advertising agencies.[123] Although neither of these respondents worked as a poster artist (instead producing copywriting and in-store signs respectively) their accounts provide important insight into work in an advertising studio. Other sources used to create Miss A include Hocknell's text, identified at the start of this section, as well as articles written in *Commercial Art.*

Although a notable contrast to the real-life examples discussed so far, in many ways the fictional figure of Miss A is representative of the experiences of agency workers, who very often did not receive the praise and attention offered to their freelance peers. These women were largely overlooked at the time of their existence, not receiving praise or notoriety within newspaper reports, and rarely seeing their poster art in exhibitions. They have also been ignored by current scholarship, where it would seem the continued requirement to 'prove' the poster's legitimacy as a field of artistic study (as discussed in the introduction) has prevented many scholars from including agency workers in their accounts, for fear of undermining arguments about the poster's value.

Like her freelance counterparts, Miss A is likely to have been born towards the end of the nineteenth century into a middle-class family. Her parents would have possessed enough money to keep her in school past the age of twelve or fourteen (the legal school leaving ages in 1899 and 1918) allowing her to receive the necessary education for a woman entering an artistic career.[124] Following this education Miss A would then have joined an art college where she would have gained further training. As the demand for poster artists grew during the 1920s and 1930s many colleges around the country began to offer specialist training in poster or commercial art, preparing their students to gain jobs in agencies or as freelance

[123] Day Survey Respondent 558, February 1937 - July 1937, Mass Observation Archive, University of Sussex Special Collections; Day Survey Respondent 039, August 1937, Mass Observation Archive. University of Sussex Special Collections.
[124] Elementary Education (School Attendance) Act 1893; Education Act 1918.

designers. *Commercial Art* ran an article on one of these schools in 1928. The magazine reported that Leicester College of Arts and Crafts gave aspiring commercial artists 'every opportunity to become thoroughly conversant with their medium' as 'the workshops are fully equipped with modern machinery and the designer can actually follow all the processes by which his work is produced'.[125]

In many ways Miss A's beginning are at odds with common assumptions surrounding agency workers, who are typically imagined as having been significantly worse-off than their freelance counterparts. However, such status is improbable. Working-class families were unlikely to have been able to put their daughters through the necessary education for an artistic career, instead requiring them to leave school during their teens in order to enter the world of work.[126] They were also unlikely to send their child to art school, something Ray Strachey lists as a requirement for an artistic career in her book *Careers and Openings for Women: A Survey of Women's Employment and a Guide for Those Seeking Work.*[127] The significance of this class divide will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, in which the accessibility of poster art will be considered .

Following her years at art college, Miss A would have been ready to enter an agency. To do so she would have been required to travel around to various companies and show them a portfolio of her work.[128] This was a highly competitive activity. Despite there being over eight hundred agencies in Britain during the 1920s and 1930s demand for jobs was high. In her book on women's employment, Strachey notes that 'salaried posts in studios are scarce' while Hocknell states that such posts 'were few in proportion to the number of applicants'.[129] Regardless of this competition there are two key reasons why Miss A may have decided to

[125] 'New Talent', *Commercial Art*, 218.
[126] R A Dawson, 'Art Training for the Industry and the Society's competitions', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 74:3834, May 1926, 618-624, 619.
[127] Ray Strachey, *Careers and Openings for Women: A Survey of Women's Employment and a Guide for Those Seeking Work*, London, 1935, 211.
[128] Gladys Peto describes this process in her interview with George Wade, 'Poster-Art Work for Girls: A talk with Miss Gladys Peto, the Well-known Artist', *The Empire Annual for Girls*, 1920, 197-200, 198.
[129] Strachey, *Careers and Openings*, 211; Hocknell, *Road to Success*, 193.

join an agency rather than enter freelance work. Firstly, agencies offered guaranteed work for an employee and therefore prevented an artist from having to chase commissions and find patrons. Murton noted the value of this. He claimed that unless, 'in addition to artistic talent, there is a flare for salesmanship' within the aspiring commercial artist, then they are better to enter an agency and benefit from the company's existing contacts before later using their experience and connections to enter a freelance career.[130] Secondly, an agency role offered a salary rather than commission-based payment and therefore provided stability to an artist in a manner not available in freelance art.

Miss A may have wished to work in London where the 350 most prestigious agencies could be found.[131] These included Carlton Studios, Clement Dane Studio, Samson and Clark, and the Curwen Press. The latter of these companies employed approximately one hundred designers between 1927 and 1940, of which more than fifty were women. [132] An equal split of men and women employees was common within agencies and can be identified in the print *The Advertising Agency at Work* by Mark Severin which was reproduced in the 1934 edition of the *Modern Publicity* journal (fig. 15).[133] Severin's print follows the depiction of Central school by Perry and uses the same cross section style to showcase the various departments in an advertising agency. Given Severin's own position in an agency (from 1932 he worked as art director of R C Casson), we can assume that his image provides a fairly accurate insight into these businesses. It is therefore interesting that women appear in every area depicted in Severin's image. For example, on the second floor Severin portrays six feminine figures working behind typewriters. These women would have been tasked with writing text (or copy) for advertisements, in a way which 'delineates the commodity advertised in such a

[130] Murton, 'Young Artist', 29.
[131] Ruth Artmonsky, *The Best Advertising Course in Town*, London, 2016 15; R H F W Bernard, 'Planning an Advertising Campaign' *Commercial Art,* December 1934, 37.
[132] Fiona Hackney, 'Women at Curwen', Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden (eds), *Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars,* Brighton, 1994, 51-56, 51.
[133] Illustration, *Modern Publicity*, 1934, 10.

manner that we immediately thirst to buy it'.[134] Meanwhile upstairs is an art room, where another feminine figure stands inspecting a piece of paper its brow furrowed in concentration. Given the size and shape of this piece of paper it seems likely to be a poster design, indicating that this feminine figure may be a poster artist.

The importance of women to the advertising industry is seen again in another part of Severin's image, in the room depicted next door to the copywriters. Signified as important by its 'head designer' sign, this room contains a feminine figure seated behind a large desk and appearing to address the two masculine figures standing before her. The feminine figure's position, which places it in line with another masculine figure seated behind an identical desk on the right, demonstrates its status and suggests that a woman is fulfilling the role of 'head designer' in this room. The role was in keeping with the positions held by a number of women who gained senior positions in advertising agencies. For example, Maude Woodyard worked as advertising director of Saward Baker and Co Ltd, Florence Sanger as managing director of Crawfords, and Ethel Wood as a director of Samson.[135] The authority of women is also discussed by respondent 558. She notes that 'the last authority behind the firm is … Mrs R' the image of whom 'is very firmly impressed' on the minds of the company's executives who are 'very sensitive as to what might possibly offend this invisible matriarch'.[136]

As well as providing us with insight into the number of women present in agencies Severin's image also demonstrates the working of an agency and its multiple departments. The structure of the agency he depicts resembles that of Colman, Prentis & Varley, which Artmonsky describes as being spread over several floors including 'the management on the ground floor' and 'the artistic rabble in the attics'.[137] Both examples provide insight into the complex system Miss A would have been part of. In contrast to freelance artists, Miss A

[134] Anon., 'Women in Advertising', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph,* 26th May 1922, 2.
[135] Artmonsky, *Designing Women*, 20.
[136] Respondent 558.
[137] Artmonsky, *Best Advertising Course,* 15.

would have worked to the instructions of an art director who would advise her on how the finished work should appear. These directors would themselves be following the instructions of their own managers, who in turn followed the instructions of the agency head. The complexities of this agency structure were laid out in a flow chart printed in *Commercial Art* (fig. 16).[138] The chart demonstrated the multiple steps an advert was subjected to before completion and the minimal influence 'in house artists' (who are featured in a single small box) held over the final design.

During Miss A's early years at the agency, she is likely to have been responsible for the fulfilment of basic duties. Her roles probably corresponded somewhat with Respondent 39, who describes how her work as 'designer' requires her to be at the company from 9:30 to 6.[139] During this time 'L [her manager] plans the work and I execute it accordingly. I also answer the 'phone, run messages, open the door to visitors, sometimes do the household shopping'.[140] These latter tasks indicate the demands placed on women agency workers beyond their artistic responsibilities, some of which (such as 'household shopping') undermine their artistic status. This was not unusual within agencies. According to Fiona Hackney, some agencies appear to have paid women artists less than their male co-workers, contradicting the standards of equal pay apparent in freelance work. [141] This lower pay was rationalised through the assigning of less artistic tasks to women, such as lettering or, in the case of Respondent 39, household tasks.

Respondent 39 also alludes to the difficulties or displeasure of producing art following another person's design.[142] She voices her distaste at the day's project 'a rather stupid looking Virgo with wings', and seems dismissive of its purpose 'exhorting you to buy

[138] W.W.J Studd, 'The Advertising Agency and what it should provide', *Commercial Art,* February 1931, 43.
[139] Day Survey 039.
[140] Day Survey 039.
[141] Hackney, 'Women at Curwen', 51.
[142] Day Survey 039.

birthday gifts according to the character of the recipient'.[143] The connections between an artists' beliefs and their poster art is a complex issue which will be discussed in greater detail in the later parts of this thesis, most notably in Chapter Four. However, it is worth noting that a separation between ideals is likely to have been particularly apparent for agency workers, who were required to follow another artists' brief when producing their work.

Depending upon the agency she worked in, Miss A may have held even less freedom than Respondent 39 describes. Agency workers were not normally responsible for an entire poster and instead produced part of a design before handing it on to another artist. Percy Bradshaw describes this method in his book *Art in Advertising* in which he notes that, in agencies, 'it is not uncommon for three or more artists to contribute to the production of one drawing', with roles normally divided based on an artists' strengths.[144] Meanwhile Murton suggests an even greater distance between artist and design. He claims that although

> Many think that they will spend their time during illustrations or designs similar to those they see in the press. They may be surprised to know that some of the largest advertising agencies do not make any finished drawings in their studios, finding that the better way is to Commission freelance artists for this purpose.[145]

It is also important to note that few advertising agencies focused specifically on poster art and, as a result, agency workers were often required to produce posters alongside work in other commercial fields, such as press advertisements, or packaging. Women such as Miss A were therefore unable to take advantage of the status afforded to poster artists who, as will be

[143] Ibid.
[144] Percy Bradshaw, *Art in Advertising*, London 1925, 171.
[145] Murton, 'Young Artist', 29.

discussed in the remainder of this thesis, were often valued on a par with fine-art artists and above their commercial art peers. However, there were some benefits to this broader approach. Most notably it meant that artists like Miss A did not lose their jobs following the fall in poster popularity after WW2. Advertising agencies continued working in the 1950s and 1960s, often gaining further power as the world of advertising expanded. Artists such as Miss A were therefore able to keep their roles as commercial artists, even if this meant shifting their focus from poster production to other areas of art.

THE CELEBRITY ARTIST

Having explored poster art as a means of making or supplementing an artistic career this final section will consider artists for whom poster art formed a much smaller part of their artistic oeuvre. The artistic value of the poster was perceived so highly during the interwar period that notable and successful fine-art artists also produced poster designs, using the medium of poster art to widen their artistic output. These artists differed from the part-time artists already discussed in this chapter because their fame and status were the very reason they became involved in poster art. In recognition of this I have labelled the final type of poster artist as 'celebrity poster artists' a moniker which foregrounds the importance of their fame to their poster work.

A number of both men and women can be considered 'celebrity poster artists' including Paul Nash and Laura Knight (1877 – 1970). The artist Vanessa Bell is another notable example of this category, and her career will form the final case study in this chapter. Of the women discussed thus far, Bell is the most researched and discussed within art history. During her lifetime Bell's artwork was regularly reviewed in London newspapers while her status as a member of the Bloomsbury group made her a popular subject for tabloid papers,

establishing both her artistic and social fame.[146] Within modern scholarship, Bell's letters have been curated into collections such as *Selected Letters of Vanessa Bell*, while her biography has been outlined in monographs by leading scholars such as Francis Spalding.[147] There have also been exhibitions of Bell's paintings at major galleries, which have showcased her work both independently (*Vanessa Bell,* Dulwich Picture Gallery, 8 February – 4 June 2017) and as part of a wider retrospective (most notably the Tate Gallery's *Art of Bloomsbury* exhibition, 4 November 1999 – 30 January 2000).

However, in recent years, established scholarship on Bell has been criticised and historians have argued that it provides an overly biographical account of Bell's career. Grace Brockington has led the way in these arguments, claiming that 'the relentlessly biographical nature of the literature on Bell has made her known, but it has also done a great deal of damage, obstructing serious attention to her work'.[148] I would argue that this biographical focus has been particularly detrimental to discussion on Bell's work in applied art, such as her work in commercial art, China decoration, and furniture design. In line with this omission, Bell's production of two posters have rarely been included in accounts of the artist and where they are discussed their importance is generally dismissed.

Bell was born on the 30th May 1879 to the writer Sir Leslie Stephen and the model and philanthropist Julia Prinsep Duckworth.[149] She had a number of siblings and half-siblings most notable among whom was the writer, Virginia Woolf. In line with the family's economic and cultural capital, Bell received considerable schooling and was initially educated at home before entering Sir Arthur Cope's art school and later the Royal Academy in 1901.[150] Following the death of her mother in 1895 and her father in 1904 Bell and her

[146] For example: Anon., 'Gallery and Studio', *Pall Mall Gazette,* 8th January 1914, 5; Anon., 'Woman Painter's Work' *The Scotsman*, 5th February 1930, 14; Mariegold, 'Mariegold On the Merry Go Round', *The Sketch*, 7th December 1932, n/p.
[147] *Selected Letters of Vanessa Bell*, (ed) Regina Mahler and Quentin Bell, London, 1994; Francis Spalding, *Vanessa Bell,* London*,* 1983.
[148] Grace Brockington, 'A "Lavender Talent" or "The Most Important Woman Painter in Europe"? Reassessing Vanessa Bell', *Art History*, 2013:36 128-153, 129.
[149] Spalding, *Vanessa Bell,* 7.
[150] Ibid 18.

siblings moved to Bloomsbury where they became part of a collective of artists and intellectuals who would later form the Bloomsbury group.[151] During this time Bell established an artistic career and began showing her paintings at exhibitions. She also set up the Friday Club, an artistic group which organised meetings and exhibitions of its member's work.[152]

By the 1920s and 1930s Bell was well recognised for her post-Impressionist art. It was due to this reputation that she was commissioned to produce a poster design for Shell Mex Oil in 1931. In her autobiography on Bell, Spalding provides some insight into the commission.[153] She notes that Bell and her artistic partner (and lover) Duncan Grant were

> two of the first artists to be employed by Jack Beddington when in 1929 he was put in charge of publicity by Shell Mex Ltd. He commissioned paintings which could be reproduced by colour lithography… Vanessa chose Alfriston church in Sussex, employing a pointillist technique and a restricted range of colours[154]

Although acknowledging the unique appearance of *Alfriston* (fig. 17)*,* Spalding's assessment hardly gives the poster the credit it deserves. Bell's use of a pointillist technique in *Alfriston* was an innovative and inspired approach to poster design, which had yet to be seen in British poster art. Relying on a viewer standing away from an artwork, pointillism was well suited to a poster's position on a hoarding which, by its very nature, meant that the object had to be viewed from afar. As in the example of Zinkeisen this indicates that Bell's artistic skills and

[151] Ibid 40 – 49.
[152] Ibid, 56.
[153] Spalding *Vanessa Bell,* 259.
[154] Ibid.

knowledge made her well placed to produce poster art and allowed her to utilise innovative approaches.

As a result of its appearance, *Alfriston* was heralded as an important example of advertising art by the press and Bell's status as the artist responsible for it was emphasised. Writing in *Commercial Art,* John Harrison commented on the 'affinity between modern ideas of art and modern publicity' using Bell's 'impressionist technique' within *Alfriston* to demonstrate these connections.[155] Meanwhile, in *The Spectator,* David Fincham highlighted the poster as an important example of advertising and encouraged readers to view it at the Shell Mex Poster Exhibition.[156] Clive Bell also gave a positive review of *Alfriston,* albeit from a slightly biased perspective given his marriage to Bell. He stated that the poster — 'the work of one of the best painters alive' — was so successful as an advert that it appealed to 'an acquaintance … who never goes into a picture gallery if he can help it' and meant that this acquaintance 'asked for Shell next time, and for the first time in his life enjoyed a work of art'.[157]

Limited in her account of Bell's first poster commission, Spalding entirely ignores Bell's second poster, which was produced for the GPO (fig.18). Such an omission is significant because it contrasts with wider scholarship on the GPO's poster campaign, where Bell's poster is frequently highlighted (although not necessarily in a positive light).[158] Initial discussions for the GPO poster began on the 25th July 1934, when Bell received a letter from the GPO's public relations officer, Stephen Tallents, referencing a poster that Bell's husband (Clive Bell) had said she was 'disposed to design'.[159] The letter indicated that Bell had voiced an interest in producing a satirical poster, and Tallents suggested that this could be done in the style of eighteenth century prints such as the 'idle with industrious apprentice'

[155] John Harrison, 'That's advertising - That is', *Commercial Art,* July 1931, 40.
[156] David Fincham, 'Shell Mex Posters, Picasso, and Other Exhibitions (book review)', *The Spectator,* 146, 967.
[157] Clive Bell, 'Shell Mex and the Painters', *The New Statesman and Nation*, 23rd June 1934, 946.
[158] Mike Barden, *Post Early : GPO Posters 1920-1960*, London 1993, 18-22; Paul Rennie, *GPO Design Posters*, London 2010, n/p.
[159] POST 33/5137, Poster Artists Mrs Clive Bell.

(presumably a reference to William Hogarth's (1697-1764) *Industry and Idleness* prints, [1747, British Museum]).[160] Tallents' letter was followed up by a contract dated the 17th August, which formally confirmed a 'royal size' poster 'illustrating the last minute rush of the public to a Post Office counter' and offered Bell fifty guineas once the design had been accepted.[161] This amount was in keeping with the payment given to 'First class artists with nothing to gain in reputation from the use of their designs by the post office' and therefore demonstrates the GPO's desire to have Bell's name and work associated with their company.[162] Bell signed this contract on 23rd August 1934, marking her second foray into poster design.[163]

Bell's decision to produce both the Shell and the GPO posters is highly significant. It provides credence to my arguments that poster design was considered a legitimate artistic medium during the early twentieth century and demonstrates that even successful artists were interested in working in this field. These ideas will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five of this thesis, where the artistic opportunities the poster offered will be considered in detail. However, regardless of the artistic significance of this commission, Bell's production of her GPO poster can hardly be considered a success. A number of issues arose surrounding the production process of this poster and its final design, many of which reveal the difficulties associated with the employment of celebrity poster artists. Such issues relate back to the different skills needed for poster design as highlighted by Purvis and McKnight Kauffer and indicate that not all artists were suited to poster production, despite the medium's appeal.

The first issue that arose around the GPO poster was Bell's slow completion time. Despite signing the contract for the GPO in August 1934, by February 7th 1935 Bell had yet to offer an example of her work, and a meeting report simply stated that she was thinking

[160] Ibid.
[161] Ibid.
[162] POST 33/5253, Poster Advisory Group, 27th June 1934.
[163] POST 33/5137, Vanessa Bell Commission.

about the design.[164] It was not until April that she submitted a poster to the committee, eight months after the original contract.[165] Bell was not the only fine-art artist to fall behind with her commission and the GPO had a similar problem with Eve Kirk (1900 – 1969). Kirk took over nineteen months to produce her poster design for the GPO, meaning that a poster she was commissioned to produce in June 1934 was not submitted until the 12th February 1936.[166] Such a turnaround was significantly slower than the completion times of full-time poster artists. For example, Calkin James was commissioned to produce a poster for the GPO in February 1934, she then submitted this to the committee on the 2nd May, before making the necessary changes ahead of its approval by the 27th June– half the time taken by Bell and a fifth of the time taken by Kirk[167]

The reasons for Bell's slow response to her commission are unclear, although it is possible to suggest several potential explanations. It is conceivable that, due to her celebrity status, Bell had other artistic responsibilities which she prioritised over the poster design, completing works for exhibitions or private sales. This may have been exacerbated by a sense of entitlement. John Hewitt argues that an artist's involvement in poster production could give 'distinction' or prestige to the poster campaign and that this is the reason why companies employed them.[168] It can be assumed that artists such as Bell recognised their value in eliciting these ideas, and that they may have taken advantage of their status to delay the production of their works.

Bell's slow completion of her GPO poster may also have been a symptom of the differing skills needed for poster design. In a letter from the 17th March 1935 Bell suggested

[164] Ibid.
[165] Ibid.
[166] POST 33/5253: Poster Advisory Group 27th June 1934; Poster Advisory Group 12th February 1936.
[167] AAD/2010/11/1/2, Order book, Rainbow Workshops; POST 33/5253: Poster Advisory Group 2nd May 1934; Poster Advisory Group 27th June 1934.
[168] John Hewitt, 'Posters of Distinction: Art, Advertising and the London, Midland, and Scottish Railways', *Design Issues*, 16.1, 2000, 16-35.

that she was struggling with the commission.[169] She recalled her work on the poster so far, describing how

> I don't know why it has been so, but for some reason it has taken me ages to do anything I thought would do at all — I think partly because of the difficulty of getting several figures into a small space and yet making them tell at a distance. I have stood about in Post Offices until your employees looked so suspicious, I had to leave! — and yet I don't know that in the end what I have done has much resemblance to a Post Office.[170]

Not only does this letter convey Bell's struggles to create the poster, but her statement, 'I don't know why' indicates her surprise at the difficulties she was facing and suggests she may have underestimated this commission. The letter therefore demonstrates the unique skills involved in poster production and the considerable talent of artists like Zinkeisen, who could move effectively between the worlds of fine art and poster design.

In line with this, the delayed completion of the GPO poster may also be attributed to nerves on behalf of Bell, whose artistic reputation was at stake if a poster was not considered to be a success. While the public nature of poster hoardings provided a valuable opportunity for artistic fame and notoriety, they also produced an exposed environment with both the press and members of the public commenting on the designs. Such publicity is likely to have been particularly nerve wracking for celebrity artists, making it appear that their reputation rested on an art form they were unfamiliar with. Bell was not wrong to be apprehensive about her poster design. Following the request to illustrate 'the last-minute rush of the public' Bell depicted a crowded post office scene in her GPO poster, in which the figure of an assistant

[169] POST 33/5137, Vanessa Bell Commission.
[170] Vanessa Bell to Stephen Tallents letter 17th March 1935.

was separated from three customers by a solid white line (as if stood behind a counter). Although intended to demonstrate the problems of late postage the dark colour scheme, painterly style, and lack of perspective, made the poster difficult to understand, thus removing a key attribute of a poster's success. As a result of these issues, despite Bell's design being approved by the Poster Advisory Group in April 1935 and printed in July of that year, by 9th June 1936 the Post Office Board reported that they had decided not to issue prints of it for display in public.[171]

The decision not to publish Bell's poster was articulated by the GPO's public relations officer Colonel Crutchley in a letter to the Post Office Poster Advisory Board.[172] This letter criticised a number of the posters commissioned by the board and noted that Bell's 'was especially disliked, not because of its method but because the treatment of the subject chosen was quite out of keeping with Post Office requirements'.[173] Crutchley went on to argue that, in the future, 'younger and less eminent artists' should be used to produce the GPO's poster designs and that the company should devote 'considerable effort to getting them "under the skin of the post office."'[174] Crutchley's suggestion implies that the problems with Bell's poster were perceived to stem directly from her artistic status, which made her unable (due to a lack of knowledge in poster design) or unwilling (due to her own perception of her artistic status) to follow the instructions given to her by the company.

Despite their apparent issues with Bell and the directive given by Crutchley, the GPO continued to employ well-known artists for the rest of their campaigns, indicating that the value of artistic status outweighed the problems it brought. For example, GPO commissioned two posters by Lili Réthi (1894 – 1969), in 1937 and employed Grace Golden (1904 – 1993) to produce posters during the 1940s. Other campaigns also commissioned notable artists to

[171] POST 33/5137, Vanessa Bell Commission.
[172] POST 33/5253, Advisory Group, 15th October 1937.
[173] Ibid.
[174] Ibid.

produce their poster designs and gained success by doing so. However, perhaps put off by her troubles with the GPO, Bell did not produce any poster art after 1936. Instead, she continued painting and also took up interior design, continuing her career until her death in 1961.

As Many Similarities as Differences

Over the course of this chapter, I have provided insight into the multiple 'types' of artist that can be considered in the category of woman poster artist as discussed in this thesis. In doing so I have attempted to prevent a perception of these women as a single homogenous group who were connected solely through their gender. As I have demonstrated, there were a myriad of ways in which women could become involved in poster art during the early twentieth century. Each type of artist discussed in this chapter — the full-time artist, the part-time artist, the competition winner, the agency worker, and the celebrity artist –approached poster production differently and achieved differing levels of success and notoriety as a result. The same is true of each individual artist, with no two women pursuing poster art in the same way, even if they had the same 'type' of career.

Despite these differences, when taken together the case studies discussed in this chapter also reveal a number of similarities or connections between the types of work undertaken by women poster artists and suggest that, regardless of their variations, they had a number of experiences in common. It is because of these similarities that I consider all types of women poster artist within this thesis, recognising the work that went into every type of career. Following on from this, throughout this thesis the term woman poster artist will be used to refer to any woman who received payment for her work in poster art between 1900 and 1939. This includes those who won money in competitions or those who received salary payments for their work in agencies.

Perhaps the most obvious connection raised between all the categories outlined in this chapter was the success that women were able to achieve through poster art. At a time when both fine-art production and the wider world of work remained hostile to women's employment, poster work appeared to welcome their contributions, with members of the industry — such as Pick — employing them to produce multiple works. Press acknowledgements of Zinkeisen as a 'poster' artist demonstrate these ideas, suggesting that despite working in both fine and poster art it was her poster designs which garnered the most attention. These ideas can also be seen in the large number of women who won prizes for their posters through the CID, as well as in the repeated employment of Batty across campaigns by London Underground, the EMB, and the railways. The factors which resulted in this more open industry will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two, where I will attempt to understand why women were able to gain work in poster art at a time when they struggled to forge fine-art careers. In doing so I will return to the women featured in this chapter, as well as to other artists like Perry whose names have only briefly been mentioned so far.

A further similarity identified in this chapter is the opportunity poster design provided for women to make money from their art. When she died in 1966, Batty left £22,226 in her will, a substantial amount which provides an indication of her earnings during her lifetime.[175] As has been noted, the women working in poster design frequently received the same payments as their male counterparts, allowing them to earn similar amounts throughout their careers. Not only was such pay significant within art production, where women's works were traditionally valued at less than their male peers, it was also significant within wider society, where the belief that women were inferior workers prevailed. The appeal of such payments will again be addressed further in Chapter Two of this thesis, while the opportunities such payment offered will be discussed in Chapter Three.

[175] Last Will and Testament of Dora Margaret Batty, Dated 19th December 1966.

Finally, the range of art produced by these women is notable. All the artists discussed in this chapter produced a variety of poster designs during their careers and used different styles to promote their wares. In some cases, this change in style was detrimental — with Bell altering her artistic approach to disastrous effect during her second foray into poster design. In other cases it led to success. Zinkeisen varied her style throughout her career and her ability to alter her approach based on her commission is likely one reason for her continued employment. Meanwhile Batty developed a signature style during the progression of her career, finally landing on the colourful works for which she was best known. This range of artistic styles will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Five, where the artistic potential of the poster will be considered. Before considering these ideas however, it is helpful to consider the reasons why so many women were able to become involved in poster art. This question will be the focus on the next chapter, where I will attempt to understand the reasons why poster art was so accessible to women artists.

CHAPTER TWO: 'ONE OF THE FOREMOST PROFESSIONS' FOR THE WOMAN ARTIST

On the 26th May 1922 the *Sheffield Telegraph* published an article entitled 'Women in Advertising'. [1] Opening with a quote from the advertising consultant Charles Higham in which he claimed that 'advertising is undoubtedly one of the foremost professions for which the intelligent, imaginative woman with ideas and the ability to express them vividly an concisely is peculiarly fitted', the article highlighted the substantial opportunities that the advertising industry offered for women's employment.[2] The journalist writing the article encouraged women to enter advertising, stressing the variety of careers available to them and 'good pay given' for this work. They even noted that someone they knew was offered '£350 a year!' for her role as advertising manager, despite having 'absolutely no technical knowledge' of the industry.[3] Having focused on the areas of advertising available to those with 'absolutely no technical knowledge', the writer of 'Women in Advertising' concluded their discussion with the claim that advertising could also provide valuable employment to the artistically trained woman.[4] The journalist argued that 'most big commercial firms' have a publicity department in which they employ 'the artist who does the illustrations'. These opportunities made it 'far more probable that the girl with artistic talent will make money by learning to design advertisements than by painting pictures'.[5]

The *Sheffield Telegraph* was not the only publication to promote women's opportunities in advertising. During the 1910s and 1920s the British press was overflowing with such claims, with writers up and down the country stressing the many opportunities

[1] Anon., 'Women in Advertising', *Sheffield Daily Telegraph,* 26th May 1922, 2.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.

open to 'the girl' who learns to design advertisements.[6] Significantly for this thesis, many of these articles focused specifically on the opportunities available in the field of poster art. In 1922 a journalist writing for *The Western Mail* stated that the 'most original and striking advertising posters are designed and executed by women', a claim that they hoped would encourage other women into the field.[7] Meanwhile, in 1927 *The Yorkshire Post* suggested that 'many of the best poster artists of the day are women' before proceeding to persuade others to join the industry, so that in the future 'there may be a greater proportion of women' producing poster designs.[8]

The assertions of opportunity expounded in the above articles do not appear to have been hyperbolic. As demonstrated in Chapter One, there were multiple ways in which women artists could enter the poster art industry, with hundreds of women doing so between 1900 and 1939. What is so significant about these articles, however, is the fact that so many writers were promoting this work to women; encouraging them to enter into poster work at a time when many professional industries were still hostile to female employment. Why was this the case? What was it about advertising and poster art which made it so accessible? And why was the industry so keen to employ women workers? In this chapter I will address these questions, in an attempt to understand why so many women were able to gain success and even fame in poster art. [9]

I am not the first person to consider the mass employment of women in either advertising or poster art during the early twentieth century. The accessibility of the industry to women artists was so notable that it is one of the few issues concerning women's poster production which has been discussed in secondary scholarship. In these accounts it has been

[6] These included, Anon., *The Common Cause,* November 2nd 1917; H F Wood, 'Women and Publicity', *Pall Mall Gazette,* November 1922, 11; Anon., 'Women Advertisers', *Vote,* 18th July 1924, n/p; Muriel Atkins, 'Women Advertising', *Lancashire Evening Post,* 30th April 1926, 2.
[7] Anon., 'Women Poster Artists', *Western Mail,* 19th October 1922, n/p.
[8] Elizabeth D'Oyley, 'Women Poster Designers', *Yorkshire Post Monday*, 18th July 1927.
[9] Deborah Simonton, *A History of European Women's Work : 1700 to the Present*, Routledge, 2002. The period discussed in this thesis is covered in particular detail across pages 181-247.

suggested that the overriding rationale behind employing women was the desire to appeal to the female consumer, a figure whose attention was highly coveted during this time.[10] In accordance with the emphasis placed on this view in current scholarship, the first part of this chapter is dedicated to ascertaining the veracity of these ideas. Here I will analyse the connections between the poster, consumer industries, and the female viewer and consider how this effected women's employment.

However, while there are undeniable connections between the employment of women poster artists and women's consumption, in the latter parts of this chapter I aim to provide a more nuanced perspective on this subject. Doing so acknowledges the poster's status as art as well as advert. Accordingly, in the second and third parts of this chapter I will consider the relevance of the poster's artistic status to the promotion of this industry to women. By considering these ideas I hope to demonstrate that there were complex and, at times, competing factors which assisted women's participation in poster art. These were consistent with the multi-faceted nature of the poster as both advert and artwork.

WOMEN KNOW WHAT WOMEN WANT

The most notable explanation given by scholars to explain women's involvement in poster art is that it was encouraged as a way of increasing the poster's appeal to other women. Emmanuella Dirix has argued this in her essay 'Fashioning the Tube: Women and Transport Posters in the 1920s and 1930s'.[11] Here Dirix claims that poster commissioners deliberately selected women artists to produce their poster art because it was believed that these women held 'invaluable insight into how to approach subjects aimed at a female audience'.[12] Teri Edelstein has also considered these ideas in her essay 'Graphic Opportunities: Women artists

[10] Emmanuelle Dirix, 'Fashioning the Tube: Posters and the New Consumers', *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design*,. David Bownes and Oliver Green (eds), 144; Teri J. Edelstein, *Art for All: British Posters for Transport*, Yale, 2010.
[11] Dirix, 'Fashioning the Tube', 144.
[12] Ibid.

and the Underground'.[13] Although laying out a range of factors that led to women's employment Edelstein places particular focus on the belief that 'the perceived ability of women to communicate with a specific audience most probably influenced their hiring'.[14]

In presenting the above ideas Dirix and Edelstein are alluding to the power of the female consumer and the resulting significance that is placed on attaining her attention in advertising. This perspective was widely held during the period discussed in this thesis and can be identified across writing on this subject. In a 1926 essay, the Austrian Advertising expert Hanns Kropff argued that the female consumer was critically important, even when her involvement in a purchase was not obvious.[15] Kropff claimed

> Seventy-five percent of all things are bought by women. Women buy for themselves, for their children, for their homes, and also very often for their husbands. Most money spent passes through the hands of women. For this reason you should check carefully whether your goods are not also purchased by women. The tie that a man buys because his wife likes it has in reality been purchased by her[16]

Kropff's beliefs were echoed by British advertising experts, who also recognised women as vital consumers. In 1927 Ethel M Wood (director of the Samson Clark advertising agency) argued that 'the majority of women act as chancellor of the home exchequer' and control a family's spending.[17] Meanwhile the advertising photographer John Everard claimed that in Britain '90 per cent of the purchasing power of the community rested with women'.[18]

[13] Edelstein, *Art for All,* 117.
[14] Ibid.
[15] Hans Kroppf, 'Women as Shoppers', *Reklame*, 1926, n/p.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Ethel Wood, 'Some Problems of Advertising to Women', *Commercial Art*, July 1927, 213.
[18] John Everard, 'Advertising to Women by photography', *Commercial Art,* December 1934, 1.

The belief that women were responsible for the majority of consumption in Britain inevitably led many to argue that the female consumer should be the central target of marketing campaigns. This was the case whether the advert was for a product — such as stock cubes or bubble bath — or for an experience — such as rail travel. Again, Wood promoted these ideas arguing that, 'the great majority of selling appeals must be addressed to women' if they were to be successful.[19] Others also considered this. In a 1926 speech given to advertising groups the co-owner of *The Yorkshire Post* and allied papers, E Tillett, emphasised that it was 'important to appeal to the imagination of women in advertising' and argued that greater effort needed to be put in to doing so.[20] In particular, Tillet exhorted advertisers to focus on the psychology of women, believing that an understanding of the female psyche would result in more effective advertising.[21]

Before considering the ways in which advertisers attempted to attract the desired female consumer it is helpful to consider who this woman was perceived to be. Helpfully for this thesis, the woman imagined as the target of 'feminine appeal' was described in detail by the author Dorothy Sayers (1893 – 1957) in her novel *Murder Must Advertise.*[22] Based on Sayer's experiences working as a copywriter for the advertising agency S H Benson, this novel offers a detailed look at the world of advertising during the early twentieth century and provides insights into the ideas that governed the industry. Sayers writes about the female consumer in considerable detail. She notes that the targeted woman was middle class and had the ability to alter her spending based on the advertising she saw. [23] This was because the advertising industry was built 'on those who, aching for a luxury beyond their reach and for a leisure for ever denied them, could be bullied or wheedled into spending their few hardly won

[19] Wood, 'Advertising to Women', 216.
[20] Anon., 'Selling to Women', *Leeds Mercury,* 8th May 1930, n/p.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Dorothy L. Sayers, *Murder Must Advertise*, London, 1933.
[23] Ibid.

shillings on whatever might give them, if only for a moment, a leisured and luxurious illusion'.[24]

Sayers goes on to note two key examples of the female consumer. The first is 'the Thrifty Housewife' whose decisions are made based on her and her family's needs.[25] The second is 'the Typist capturing the affections of Prince Charming' who spends money on products intended to make her more attractive to the opposite sex.[26] Both of these figures were also identified in other accounts of the time. Harold Sanderson, Vice-President of the Royal Society of Arts and expert on the use of art in industry, described the targeted woman as a 'jaded housewife' who advertisers must encourage 'to buy still more soap or chocolate, cigarettes or cosmetics'.[27] Meanwhile Everard claimed that a woman's motivations as a consumer were 'to create for themselves a character, to adorn a series of vividly imagined occasions, in short, to please' a claim which mimics Sayers' description of 'capturing the affections of Prince Charming'.[28]

In recognition of the female consumer's importance there were considerable discussions on how best to appeal to her within advertising. Many advertising experts suggested the need to appeal to a woman's domestic instincts as both mother (or future mother) and homemaker; an approach which assumed that a woman's decisions were almost always related to her desire for a happy and healthy family. These experts stressed the need for images of children in advertising in order to evoke these instincts. In 1927 social reformer Dame Beatrix Hudson Lyall claimed that women appreciated and were drawn towards adverts 'with children and to a lesser degree those with animals'.[29] Meanwhile in a letter printed in *Commercial Art* in 1928, Margery Thompson, a self-proclaimed 'woman in

[24] Ibid, 180.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Harold W Sanderson, 'Art Schools and Art in Industry', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 4232, 1933, 185.
[28] Everard, 'Advertising to Women by photography', 3.
[29] Hudson Lyall, 'Posters Women Like', *Western Morning News*, 21st July 1927, 7.

advertising', described the appeal that 'bonny babies' held for women viewing advertisements.[30]

Experts also discussed the need for adverts to display 'pleasantness' and 'positivity' in order to generate 'feminine appeal'. The reasons for this varied. Wood claimed that such imagery was necessary because a woman was so 'preoccupied with her home, her children, her table, her person', that she needed 'an advertisement which is "easy on the eyes"' if she was to engage with it.[31] Meanwhile, others suggested that the need for such pleasantness was the result of entrenched gender differences. For example, Hudson Lyall claimed that women responded to 'holiday posters [the term used for railway posters during this period] with an atmosphere' but did not respond to images of 'railway stations and trains' which were better suited to men.[32] Gender differences were also discussed by Phillip Chandler in a 1924 edition of American magazine *The Poster.* [33] Here Chandler claimed that 'colour has had a distinctly feminine appeal from the earliest days of civilisation', meaning that colourful advertising would attract a woman's attention. [34]

Finally, experts stressed the need to appeal to women's personal desires. H Lewis Selby, advertising manager of Kayser Bonder Ltd argued this in 1938, stating that a woman 'likes to think she looks like the picture' in a poster and will buy a product in the hope of achieving this.[35] Wood takes a more critical perspective. She claims that 'optimism, credulity, or mere refusal to reason', made women victims of 'the beauteous creatures' who appeared in advertising.[36] The desire amongst women to resemble the figures they saw in adverts has been used to explain the preponderance of young, glamourous, women in poster advertising from this period. The significance of these aspirational figures will be discussed further in

[30] Margery Thompson, 'Letters to the Editor', *Commercial Art*, January 1928, 138.
[31] Wood, 'Advertising to Women', 216.
[32] Anon., 'Posters Women Like', *Western Morning News,* 21st July 1927.
[33] Phillip Chandler, 'Why Posters Appeal to Women', *The Poster,* July 1924, n/p.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Anon., 'How Women Respond to Advertising', *Hull Daily Mail*, 3rd May 1938, 9.
[36] Wood, 'Advertising to Women', 216.

Chapter Four of this thesis, where the depiction of the feminine figure in poster art will be discussed in detail. For now, however, it is sufficient to note that the presence of the aspirational feminine figure can be understood as a direct appeal to the female consumer, in an attempt to attract her interest.

Underlying the analysis around *how* to appeal to women in advertising were further discussions, moving beyond the contents of adverts to consider *who* was best placed to produce these works. Many twentieth-century advertising experts agreed that women advertisers were best at targeting the female consumer because they instinctively understood the desires of their own gender. This theory, which was promoted by Kropff, as well as many others, developed out of earlier employment practices in which women shop assistants were hired on the basis that 'they knew what women wanted'.[37] It is also evidenced in the large number of women writers and advertising experts that I cited in the previous paragraphs. The ability of women such as Wood, Thompson, and Lyall to comment on female appeal in national papers and trade journals demonstrates the credence given to women's ideas on advertising. It is these beliefs that form the foundations of Dirix and Edelstein's arguments, resulting in their claims that women poster artists were employed specifically to appeal to their own gender.

In keeping with these ideas, many of the posters produced by women artists do appear to have been designed with the female consumer in mind. One example of this is Freda Lingstrom's poster *Stay At Dartmouth* (fig. 19) which she produced for the GWR in the 1930s. The poster shows a topographic landscape of Devon through which the River Dart runs across the centre, separating the shore from the land. In the foreground is a small, pebbled bay which is lined with rocks that continue along the edge of the image framing the scene. In the centre of the image the shape of Dartmouth castle can just be made out amidst

[37] Simonton, *Women's Work,* 246.

patches of green which rise rapidly into a wooded hill. The blue and gold tones of the water create a sense of harmony across the poster, as similar cool colours appear in the cloudy sky. The effect is one of serenity, which appeals to Hudson Lyall's demands for holiday posters 'with atmosphere'.

The only figures in Lingstrom's poster are two children who appear to the left of the image facing the river. The youth of these figures is signified by their bare legs, white ankle socks, and hunched postures, which make them appear vulnerable against the vast landscape in which they stand. This vulnerability is emphasised by their size. The figures' small stature is exaggerated by the layout of the poster which distorts perspective and focuses on the large scale of the surrounding landscape, so that the child figures are dwarfed in comparison. As the viewer, we are positioned away from this central scene, raised up as if observing it from a pile of rocks (such as those seen to the left of the image). This position and the dichotomy between the child figures' vulnerability and their apparent lack of concern surrounding our presence is significant. It places the viewer in a position of authority — looking down at the children and observing them in the way a mother may watch her children play. The viewer is therefore encouraged to embody the maternal figure and imagine herself and her family in this location, so that the advertised journey is sold on its appeal to maternal instincts.

Eileen Seyd's poster *For Your Shopping* (fig. 20) also addressed a female consumer, encouraging her to take advantage of 'cheap rail tickets' to go shopping. Produced for the Southern Railway (SR), Seyd's poster features three feminine figures who sit next to one another in a railway carriage. Although the focus of the image, the faces of these figures are largely cut off by the picture frame, so that we can only make out the tops or sides of their heads. The majority of Seyd's image is instead devoted to the luggage rack above the figures. This is filled with bags and baskets of groceries, presumably gathered during the kind of shopping trip the poster promotes. By shifting the viewpoint Seyd emphasises the quantity of

the parcels shown and makes it appear as if the weight of these goods has forced the frame down. The effect implies that savings made on ‘cheap’ train tickets have made it possible for the feminine figures to acquire more luxuries during shopping trips, such as the tulips depicted on the left.

The feminine figures in Seyd’s poster and the understanding of shopping as a female activity confirm that this poster was produced with the female viewer in mind. Despite this, what is interesting about Seyd’s poster is that it seems to upset the traditional binary within advertising, in which the feminine figure is presented as either the ‘housewife’ (a mature woman, shown with children, often in the domestic sphere) or as ‘the typist’ (younger, appearing in public and buying luxuries for herself). In Seyd’s poster the figures conflate these two tropes into a single image. Despite appearing in public and engaging in a personal shopping trip the figures Seyd has depicted are older, with white hair and wrinkles around their eyes, noses, and chins. Such a depiction may be an indication of Seyd’s deeper insight into the female consumer beyond the caricatured figure traditionally seen in advertising. An insight which is in keeping with the belief that women were better suited to appealing to women.

Querying Established Ideas

While the above examples certainly prove that in some cases women artists did create ‘feminine appeal’ in their poster designs, in my opinion suggesting that this was the primary reason for their employment is overly simplistic. On a basic level, such claims ignore the fact that many men were also employed to produce posters that addressed the female consumer. In 1933 André Marty (1886 – 1956) produced several posters for London Transport which were intended to encourage mothers to take their children to events across London. These works typically focused on a feminine figure (the mother) participating in an event with her

child. For example, in *Crocus Time* (fig. 21) the figure of a young mother is shown sitting on a grass mound surrounded by crocuses. The figure of a child stands opposite and reaches out to hand a bunch of crocuses to its mother, in an idealistic scene of maternal bliss. The matching colour scheme of the poster and the serene expressions on the figures' faces emphasise the joy of the scene and create an image that a female viewer would wish to replicate.

Marty was not the only male artist to address the female viewer and feminine appeal can be seen across works by male artists. In *Empire Christmas Pudding* (fig.1)*,* F C Harrison (1901 –1984) addressed the housewife, persuading her to buy empire products at Christmas through the depiction of an aspirational scene. In *Summer Sales,* Horace Taylor (1881 – 1934) used bright colours and patterns to encourage women to visit the sales via the Underground. Meanwhile in *Getting Ready for the East Coast,* Tom Purvis advertised a trip on the LNER through the image of a young child packing their suitcase. The existence of these posters, and their adherence to the rules of feminine appeal discussed above, raises questions around the employment of women to generate this. It indicates that — while in theory women may have been employed to increase feminine engagement — in reality this was not always the case.

Indeed, there is little (if any) direct evidence of gender being considered by companies when commissioning poster art. None of the minutes from the publicity meetings of the EMB, GPO, or London Transport indicate any discussion of gender when assigning a commission and there were many instances when both male and female artists were considered for the same work. For example, the EMB minutes for 6th January 1927 state that 'it was agreed that the following artists should be approached for the design of a double crown bill suitable for display in grocers and fruiterers shop windows — Mr Austin Cooper.

Miss Irene Fawkes. Mr Gayton'.[38] There are also multiple examples of both men and women working on the same campaign. Sometimes this was because one artist took over another's commission, as seen in Dora Batty's adoption of A E Taylor's *March of the Empire* series (discussed in the previous chapter). Other times this came about because a campaign ran over several years and needed multiple artists to contribute to it.

One example of an annual campaign with both male and female contributors is the London Transport's 'bluebell' posters, a series of adverts which were intended to encourage the public to visit Kew for 'Bluebell Sunday'.[39] Taking place around the third weekend of May, Bluebell Sunday was an economically important day in the London Transport calendar, as it held lucrative potential with 'hundreds of thousands' of extra passengers travelling on the Underground and buses.[40] As a result, the posters relating to the weekend were carefully planned, with many created almost a year before the event took place. Minutes for London Transport's publicity committee demonstrate the considerable scrutiny these posters were subjected to. A poster by one of the company's most prolific designers, Herry Perry, was turned down in July 1935 because it was felt to be inaccurate, given that 'bluebells did not grow in open fields but under trees'.[41] This criticism came despite the fact that Perry had produced two successful Bluebell campaigns for the company over the previous four years, in addition to many other widely praised examples of poster art.

Given the scrutiny placed on the Bluebell posters, it seems notable that there is no evidence of an artist's gender being discussed when commissioning works for the campaign. This is despite Allison Lesch's belief that 'outdoor outing' posters such as the Bluebell campaign were directly addressed towards female viewers.[42] In reality, there was a fairly

[38] CO 760/26: Publicity Committee, Poster Section, 1927.
[39] Anon., 'A Running Commentary on The Week's News: A Carpet of Blue', *The Sphere*, 27th May 1922, n/p.
[40] Anon.' 'Bluebell Pilgrims. London's Homage to The Emblem of Springtime. Picnics Again. - To-Morrow Is Bluebell Sunday', *Pall Mall Gazette,* 20th May 1922, n/p; Anon., '"Bluebell" Sunday', *Daily Herald*, 16th May 1924, 5.
[41] LT 606/09 Minutes of Vice Chairman's publicity meeting 4th July 1935.
[42] Allison Lesch, 'By Underground to a Modern Woman: The Role of Female Artists and Passengers in London Transport Posters', *Valley Humanities Review,* Spring 2015, 1-21, 18.

even gender split between the artists employed for the Bluebell posters with seven men and eight women working on it before 1939. Similar figures can be found for other 'outdoor' campaigns. Five women and eight men produced posters advertising 'Chestnuts at Bushy Park', while 'Daffodil time at Hampton Court' was advertised by an even split of four men and four women, and 'Tulip Time' by one man and one woman.[43] Other campaigns were also evenly split. Posters advertising the Wimbledon Tennis Tournament were produced by five women and eight men, while five men and four women produced posters advertising the Rugby World Cup.[44]

Returning to the Bluebell posters it is possible to ascertain a number of stylistic similarities between the works. Many of the artists employed on the bluebell campaign created detailed poster designs which featured naturalistic bluebells and realistic colour schemes. Such delicate imagery was in-keeping with these artists' wider artistic outputs. For example, Hawley Morgan (dates unknown), who created a detailed poster of bluebells in a field in 1916 (fig. 22), used thin and intricate lines in his poster that were also seen in his illustrations for children's books such as *The Adventures of ChippyBobbie* (1927, Thomas Neolson and Sons). Similarly, Dorothy Hutton produced a Bluebell poster (fig. 23) in which the flowers were depicted in light pastel shades, resembling the intricate watercolour landscapes for which she was best known. Such similarities between an artist's oeuvre and their poster art indicates that they may have been chosen based on their ability or style, with gender holding no impact over the artist deemed best suited to the work.

Evidence of commissions being awarded based on an artist's ability or style were not limited to London Transport and there are multiple instances in which this can be identified. One example dates to the 1930s when the London, Midland, and Scottish Railway (LMS) commissioned two artists to produce posters advertising their construction works at Crewe.

[43] Statistics gathered from London Transport Museum Catalogue.
[44] Statistics gathered from London Transport Museum Catalogue.

The resulting posters *Crewe Works*, (fig. 24) by Lili Réthi and *Building an Engine at Crewe Works* by Norman Wilkinson (1878 – 1971) (fig. 25) were both produced in a detailed manner and offered an accurate depiction of the machinery and tools needed to build the steam engines. Although such imagery was not in keeping with the demands of the female focused holiday poster which Hudson Lyall identified above, it was consistent with both Réthi and Wilkinson's personal style. Both artists were widely renowned for producing detailed industrial paintings which arose from the rigorous sketches they made while visiting a site. [45] In an article of 1964, *The New York Times* commented on the significance of this in relation to Réthi, describing how,

> from her girlhood days in Vienna, Miss Réthi has been fascinated by construction workers and driven to draw them in action. When she was 22 years old, she went into the mines of the Ruhr disguised as a worker—complete with safety lamp and coveralls…In Hamburg she drew shipyards, in Belgium canals, in Denmark bridges.[46]

It is therefore likely that LMS commissioned both artists because the company recognised their suitability to the campaign, again prioritising skill over gender.

The above examples undermine the arguments currently forwarded in poster scholarship (Dirix, Edelstein) and suggest that the majority of women artists were not employed to provide 'feminine appeal' in poster art. Indeed, I would go so far as to suggest that, according to the evidence laid out here, gender was rarely a factor effecting the commissioning of women artists. Such a statement may appear contradictory given the

[45] Paul Rennie, 'Norman Wilkinson', eds. H. C. G. Matthew et al, *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004; Anon., 'A Little Spinster Deftly Tucks Great Bridge into Sketchbook', *New Yorker,* 5th May 1964, n/p.
[46] Anon., 'A Little Spinster', n/p.

contemporaneous discussions around advertising and the female consumer put forward at the beginning of this chapter. However, my theories are in-keeping with the complex status poster art held during this time. During the early twentieth century poster art was perceived differently to other forms of advertising. The poster was discussed separately in trade journals and deemed more worthy of artistic attention; both in terms of those producing posters (leading to the involvement of 'celebrity' artists such as Vanessa Bell) and the attention paid to them in the press (where they were regularly reviewed by art critics). Poster artists were also part of different groups and unions than their advertising colleagues. For example, women poster artists were not allowed to join the Woman's Advertising Club (WAC), due to a belief that their interests were not represented by the club's aims.[47]

This separation of poster art from other forms of advertising came about for a variety of reasons. One of the most notable was that the posters produced by leading commissioners — such as the railways, Shell Mex Oil, London Transport, and the GPO — were rarely (if ever) intended to increase sales, with many of these companies already existing in a monopoly of their industry. Instead, the poster art produced by these companies was intended as a pre-emptive strike against criticism and as a means of generating public support, a very different purpose to most forms of advertising. Frank Pick noted this, claiming that the purpose of Underground posters was not always 'immediately directed to securing passengers' but was instead to aid 'the establishment of goodwill and good understanding between the passengers and the company'.[48] Similar ideas of 'goodwill' were discussed in relation to the EMB posters, while the GPO aimed to promote developments occurring in the company, again with the view of establishing a positive reputation.[49]

[47] Artmonsky, *Designing Women,* 19.
[48] Frank Pick, '"Underground" posters', *Commercial Art,* January 1927, 137.
[49] Douglas Woodruff, 'The Empire Marketing Board', *Fortnightly Review*, 135, August 1933, 208-216, 208; Yasuko Suga, 'State Patronage of Design?: The Elitism/Commercialism Battle in the General Post Office's Graphic Production', *Journal of Design History,* 13:1, 2000, 23–37

A further reason that poster art was considered separately from other advertising forms were the different production methods involved. Creating a poster required an artist to use skills and techniques which were more closely associated with the production of paintings than other advertising forms. Not only did these similar techniques make it possible for artists like Anna Zinkeisen to move between the two mediums in the manner discussed in Chapter One, but it also gave the poster status above other types of advertising. Stefan Schwarzkopf has considered the alternative status of the poster and the poster artist in detail. He notes that working at an easel or 'in an up-right position was a posture that differentiated them [poster artists] deliberately from the lower middle-class, run-of-the-mill illustrators in advertising agencies who worked in the same sitting positions as all other office clerks'.[50] Schwarzkopf also argues that this separation was further enforced by the tendency for poster artists to sign their work at the bottom of an image, aping the act of an artist signing a finished canvas.[51]

The display of the posters on horizontal display hoardings further embedded these differences and strengthened the posters' connection to painting. It has already been noted that the poster hoardings were widely known as the 'art galleries of the British public', with everyone from the Prince of Wales to art critics referring to them in this manner.[52] Cyril Sheldon, the head of the bill posting firm Sheldon's Ltd, also considered this connection in 1930 when he claimed that 'a hoarding is an erection for the exhibition of posters'.[53] Sheldon's use of the verb 'exhibition' highlights the fact that the posters were not merely distributed on walls, but were instead displayed carefully, in a manner traditionally reserved for an art gallery. Identifiable in photographs of posters (fig. 26), these careful exhibition

[50] Stefan Schwarzkopf, 'Creativity, Capital and Tacit Knowledge', *Journal of Cultural Economy,* 1:2, July 2008, 181–97, 189.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Anon., 'The Prince of Wales on the Art of the Hoarding', *Commercial Art,* June 1923, 160.
[53] Cyril Sheldon, 'Cyril Sheldon on the Hoarding of To-Day', *Commercial Art,* May 1930, 220.

methods prompted a viewer to stop and look at the appearance of the posters and encouraged an appreciation of the works as if they were art.

As a result of the poster's purpose as a 'good-will' generator and its artistic connections, aesthetic imagery came to be prioritised within poster production. Consequently, a focus on creating feminine appeal became less relevant. Some writers even actively distanced the poster from the focus on the female consumer discussed above. In a 1914 article 'Women in Advertising', published in the *Liverpool Daily Post,* the journalist suggested that the need for women as producers to appeal to women as consumers was present in all areas of advertising except for the poster, which came 'under the heading of a rather specialised branch of art' and was therefore governed by different rules.[54] Meanwhile, a contributor to the *Penrose Annual* stressed the importance of selecting the right artist when producing poster art.[55] This was because in poster design, 'the work of the artist is absolutely the dominant factor, whereas in all other printed matter the illustration is usually mere adjunct to the printed word'.[56]

These differences between poster art and wider advertising reveal a key issue within current poster scholarship. The tendency to write about posters only in highly illustrated books for a general readership has been detrimental to research on the poster and has not provided the opportunity for in-depth analysis or consideration. The poster's complex status — at once outside the world of advertising due to its connections to painting but at the same time excluded from fine art due to its connections to consumerism — has therefore been overlooked by those writing on this subject, resulting in complex issues being simplified. The current popularity of British interwar poster art and the proliferation of books on this topic has perpetuated these issues further and has meant that simplified ideas have been re-asserted

[54] Anon., 'Women in Advertising', *Liverpool Daily Post,* 26th January 1914, n/p.
[55] H K Frenzel, 'From Utamaro to Cassandra', *Penrose Annual*, 1934, 3.
[56] Ibid.

across accounts, leading to assumptions being made about feminine appeal which are not historically accurate.

AN ALTERNATIVE ARTISTIC ARENA

So far in this chapter I have disputed the idea that the employment of women poster artists was based largely on their ability to produce feminine appeal. In doing so I have revealed a number of instances in which women artists were commissioned for poster work based on their artistic skill and style. However, while such examples explain the employment of individual women, they fail to account for the large-scale promotion of this industry in the manner laid out at the start of this chapter. Women possessed skills that would make them valuable employees in a variety of industries during the early twentieth century and yet they did not gain work in these fields to the extent that they did in poster art. This was particularly notable in the world of fine art where, despite their talent, women artists were still met with hostility and were generally unable to gain success to the extent of their male peers. Given these facts, arguing that the widespread promotion of poster art to women was due to a recognition of artistic skill seems naive. In the second part of this chapter I will address these issues. Here I will move beyond a focus on the poster as advertising to consider the poster as art, examining how this effected its promotion to aspiring women artists.

It is my belief that understanding the employment of women in poster art requires an understanding of the art world during this time. As noted in Chapter One, the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries saw a considerable increase in women attending art schools across Britain and this grew further following the decision to admit women into life drawing classes at the Royal Academy during the 1890s.[57] Initially intended to offer a woman the opportunity

[57] Deborah Cherry, 'Going Places: Women Artists in Central London in the Mid Nineteenth Century', *The London Journal,* 28:1, 2003, 73-96, 87.

for self-improvement, before she settled down to marriage, opportunities offered by art schooling altered as female attendance grew and many women began entering art school with a view to pursuing an artistic career.[58] As a result, by the 1900s there was significant demand for artistic opportunities for women artists, with hundreds of trained women looking for work.

Demands for women's artistic employment were also increased by the changes occurring in society during this time. The rising power of the suffrage and women's rights movements resulted in calls for women to be given greater opportunities in the world of work. Magazines such as *Vote* encouraged their female readers to search for jobs as a means of furthering the women's rights cause, presenting work as a morally beneficial activity to both the woman involved and wider society.[59] Significantly, these calls stressed the need for middle and upper-class women to work as well as those whose economic stability relied upon being in employment.[60] This is particularly relevant to discussions of poster art as many of the artists came from middle or even upper-class families and were therefore undertaking commissions to fulfil personal or professional desires rather than economic ones. For example, Gwen Raverat, (1885 – 1957) who produced posters for LNER, grew up as the daughter of astronomer Sir Howard George Darwin and granddaughter of Charles Darwin before marrying the successful artist Jacques Raverat (1885 – 1925) in 1911.[61] Similarly, Edna Clarke Hall who produced work for the Underground, Shell Oil, and the GPO, was the daughter of Benjamin Waugh assistant founder of the NSPCC and, at the age of just nineteen, married the Magistrate and author Sir William Clarke Hall.[62]

The growing demand for professional opportunities amongst women artists created uncertainty within the art world. Many male artists feared the competition these women

[58] Bridgit Elliott and Janice Helland, *Women Artists, and the Decorative Arts 1880-1935*, Oxford, 2002, 6.
[59] Anon., 'Men's Opinions on women work', *Vote*, 29th April 1932, n/p.
[60] Viscountess Rhondda, 'Women and business', *Quiver*, 1919, 1023-1024.
[61] Frances Spalding, *Gwen Raverat: Friends, Family and Affections,* London, 2001, 12.
[62] Alison Thomas, 'Hall, Edna Clarke , Lady Clarke Hall (1879–1979)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004.

represented and worried that it would affect their own careers. These concerns were discussed in detail by the art press, who emphasised the threat posed by the 'multitude of [women] painters' emerging from art schools, who were taking work from male artists whose 'talents were once sufficient to procure a livelihood, but who now find themselves pushed aside'.[63] The issues that arose around the 1921 RA exhibition were also a symptom of these fears. As noted in Chapter One, female participation in this exhibition was criticised in the press, as journalists accused the women that were exhibiting of committing 'crimes' against their male rivals. In order to emphasise the issues associated with female participation, press reports concerning this exhibition undermined the women artists' talents and caricatured those involved. This included describing the women as 'flappers' (a symbol of social turbulence), commenting on their preference towards smoking (considered an un-feminine activity), and accusing them of using 'youthful witchery' to achieve success.[64]

One means of protecting themselves from this perceived onslaught of women artists was for men to establish their own arenas within artistic production. This was attempted in numerous ways. According to Lisa Tickner artists such as Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882 – 1957) and Augustus John (1878 – 1961) established this separation by entrenching the masculine nature of modernism, making it harder for women to produce artworks within this highly valued field.[65] Meanwhile, Cheryl Buckley argues that the awarding of different jobs to male and female artists in the pottery industry 'kept women out of direct competition with men' and made the act of women's employment more palatable.[66] I would argue that the encouragement of women to enter the world of poster art was another example of this separation. By encouraging women to enter poster art, male artists were able to maintain their

[63] Marcus Huish, 'Whence Comes this Multitude of Painters?' *The Nineteenth Century: a monthly review*, November 1892, 189.
[64] Anon., 'Royal Academy', *Sunday Herald*, 8th May 1921 n/p; The media's desire to associate the flapper with unwanted social change has been widely established within scholarship. One notable example of this is Adrian Bingham, '"Stop the Flapper Vote Folly": Lord Rothermere, the Daily Mail, and the Equalization of the Franchise 1927–28', *Twentieth Century British History*, 13:1, 2002, 17–37.
[65] Lisa Tickner, 'Men's Work? Masculinity and Modernism', (eds) Norman Bryson, Ann Holly Michael, and Keith Moxey, *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations,* New England, 1994, 42-84, 48.
[66] Cheryl Buckley, '"The noblesse of the banks": craft, hierarchies, gender divisions, and the roles of women paintresses and designers in the British pottery industry 1890-1939', *Journal of Design History*, 2:4, 1989, 257 -273, 259.

dominance in fine art. This ensured that even if women achieved artistic success, it would remain in areas of lower value, and thus not be held in the same esteem as that of men.

In many ways the field of poster art was uniquely set up to take on the position of this separate feminine arena of art. For starters, there was a growing need for poster artists following World War One. The mass production of printed material during the conflict led to improved methods of lithographic printing which made the production of poster art both quicker and cheaper. The use of posters during the war also emphasised the medium's efficiency as a communication device and the potential uses for it. As a result, the number of advertising posters commissioned grew exponentially in the years that followed the war. This increased demand for posters was reflected in an increased demand for poster artists and meant that women were able to enter the field without taking jobs from already employed men. Reducing the perceived threat women posed and preventing fears that existing artists would be 'pushed aside'.

In addition to the growing demands for poster art, the poster's connection to painting (as established above) meant that it offered an alternative to fine art while still allowing women to utilise the skills that they had learned in art school. This potential was widely recognised at the time and was promoted by those in the poster industry. In 1926 Sydney Jones argued that the poster 'presents exceptional opportunities to artists who are able to think and work in that large manner which appeals to the public'.[67] Similarly, in 1933 J L Beddington, the publicity manager at Shell Mex, argued that poster design offered numerous benefits to 'an extraordinary number of talented, well-trained, sincere and energetic young artists', who 'suffer very severely from such bad times as these'.[68] Such connections made it easier to encourage women artists into poster production and reduced the sense that they were being moved into a lower art form.

[67] Sydney R Jones, *Posters and Publicity*, London 1926, 1.
[68] J L Beddington, 'Less Bunk and More Sense', Leonard Richmond (ed.) *The Technique of the Poster*, London 1933, 130.

Despite its connections to painting, the poster's purpose as an advertisement also complicated its artistic status and made the industry suitable as a separate arena for women to participate in. Since the 1970s a number of feminist scholars have identified a link between women's involvement in design during the early twentieth century and their earlier work in the decorative arts.[69] In their exhibition *Women Designing: Redefining Design in Britain Between the Wars,* Seddon and Worden argued that there was a 'loose distinction' between decorative art and design, due to the similar skills needed for both art forms.[70] This 'loose distinction' opened considerable opportunities for women to get involved in design work. For example, Sacha Llewllyn has argued that the linear nature of illustration made it the 'legitimate dependent' of embroidery sanctifying women's participation in this field.[71]

As a result of its commercial art status similar associations can be drawn between decorative art and poster design. Given this, it is perhaps unsurprising that a number of women artists came to poster design following a career in other applied art arenas such as illustration. Hilda Cowham (1873 – 1964) was one of these artists, producing the poster *Kensington Gardens* for London Transport in 1915 (fig. 27). Cowham's poster depicts a group of fourteen children who stand around a lake playing with sailing boats. The figures resemble those depicted by Cowham in other illustrations, as they feature the same round heads, rosy cheeks, short bodies, and long thin legs as the figures in her children's books. The linear style in which the figures are drawn is also similar, resembling the pen and watercolour conventionally used in illustration. Meanwhile, the layout of the poster resembles the page of a picture book, as Cowham's image is placed within the top three quarters of the poster while the final quarter is reserved for a short poem.

[69] Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden, *Women Designing : Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars*, Exhibition Catalogue, University of Brighton Gallery, March 1994, Brighton, 1994, 16-19, 17; Suzette Worden and Jill Seddon, 'Woman Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s' 2nd European Feminist Research Conference, Austria 1994.
[70] Worden and Seddon, 'Woman Designers in Britain in the 1920s and 1930s', 365
[71] Sacha Llewllyn, *Winifred Knight*, Dulwich, 2016, 21

Other illustrators also used their experience in illustration to produce their poster art. Dora McClaren's poster *For Horesdon Hill*, 1914 (fig. 28) focused on the children's story of the Pied Piper, using this to advertise the Underground as a means of accessing green countryside areas. Like Cowham, McClaren uses her illustrative style in this poster, emphasising its storybook feel. This is underscored further by the text, which includes a quotation from the original Pied Piper poem, written by Robert Browning. Given that both Cowham and Mcclaren's posters were produced at the beginning of the poster movement it seems possible that the poster's applied art status inspired their move across mediums. These connections to illustration, and the use of an illustrative style, may also have helped to sanction the commissioning of a female artist, establishing a precedent which would later allow women to work in all styles of poster art.

Beyond its entrenched status as a lesser medium a further reason that applied art was considered an acceptable arena for women artists was that it could be produced in the home. Catherine Flood has noted that the ability to create illustration in the domestic space aided women's participation in this field during the nineteenth century.[72] She describes how in George Elliot's novel *Daniel Deronda* the image of a female character 'working at her drawing by candle-light, surrounded by her family is an image of domesticity that absorbs Kate's professionalism' and therefore makes her art acceptable.[73] Similarly Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei have argued that 'because of its association with the home … interior decorating was one of the few métiers deemed acceptable for women' during the interwar. [74]

Almost all elements of poster production could also be completed in the home and passed to commissioners through written correspondence. A 1923 article on Dorothy

[72] Catherine Flood, 'Contrary to the Habits of Their Sex? Women Drawing on Wood and the Careers of Florence and Adelaide Claxton', eds. Kyriaki Hadjiafxendi and Patricia Zakreski, *Crafting the Woman Professional in the Long Nineteenth Century: Artistry and Industry in Britain*, Farnham, 2013, 107-121.
[73] Ibid, 111.
[74] Chiara Briganti and Kathy Mezei, 'Designs for Living: Female Designers, the Designing Female, Modernism and the Middlebrow', *Modernist Cultures*, 6:1, 2011, 155 – 177, 167.

Burroughes (1884 – 1963) noted that she gained work in poster art by sending 'two or three rough sketches to the Underground Railway' from her family home.[75] This apparently led to the production of her first poster advertising London Zoo. Meanwhile, minutes relating to the production of posters for the town of Torquay by the GWR record postal correspondence with artists. In this case copies of poster designs were exchanged by post, moving between the artist, the GWR (based at Paddington Station in London), and the local Torquay council, with feedback also being communicated through writing.[76]

It seems undeniable that the ability to produce poster art from within the home would have been beneficial in the sanctification of poster art as an arena of work for women artists. By working at home it was believed that women could follow their perceived duties and work as housewives and mothers as well as artists. Such opportunities followed a precedent within Britain where, until the industrial revolution, many women had juggled both 'productive as well as reproductive work'.[77] The perceived ability of the poster artist to balance work with the expectations of appropriate femininity, therefore lessened the threat she posed to both the art world and society. This in turn provided the foundation for the acceptance of this labour.[78] Although, in reality, the number of women poster artists with children appears to have been minimal (with the majority also not marrying) such ideas remain important and likely played a key role in establishing the acceptance of poster art.

In evidence of the importance of at-home production the potential to produce poster art within the domestic space was emphasised in the media. One example of this is a newsreel produced by *Eve Pictorials* in 1921.[79] This reel focuses on the artist Mabel Attwell (1879 – 1964) and was intended to provide a glimpse into her artistic process through a series of shots

[75] Vere Hutchinson, 'Dorothy Burroughes: An Impression', *Drawing and Design,* 1923, n/p.
[76] Torquay Council Minutes, 1922-1938, Torquay Library. I discuss these minutes and the circuits of communication in detail in my article Rebecca Savage, 'The artist, the advertiser and the public: the great Western railway poster as collaborative design', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 21:3, 363-384.
[77] Ann Taylor Allen, *Feminism and Motherhood in Western, Europe 1890-1970: The Maternal Dilemma*, New York, 2005, 69.
[78] Jessica S. Bean, '"To help keep the home going": female labour supply in interwar London', *The Economic History Review*, 68:2, 2015, 441–70.
[79] *Celebrities At Home — Miss Mabel Lucie Attwell,* Eve Pictorials, British Pathe, 1921

showing her working at home. These shots were built around emphasising Attwell's domestic and maternal instincts, ultimately presenting her work, and that of other poster artists, as being compatible with maternal responsibilities. In line with this, although ostensibly appearing to be a comment on all areas of Attwell's artistic career, the film is focused specifically on Attwell's poster design. In the second-to-last scene a close-up reveals Attwell to be finishing a painting which would later be used as the design for the Underground poster *Christmas in Fairyland*, most likely familiar to those viewing the film.

Attwell's status as a mother is played out across the newsreel. In the first scene she is depicted near her three children, who sit and play around her as she works. An intertitle informs the viewer that these children and 'those of friends' are used by Attwell as models for her artworks, providing inspiration for the cherubic infants which she is best known for. This statement serves to emphasise Attwell's position within the domestic space and directly ties her status as a mother to her artistic success (implying that the latter was only possible because of the former). Such ideas are emphasised to the point of hilarity by the scene which follows the intertitle, in which a large bow is placed on Attwell's youngest son's head. This oversized bow is an image which is commonly seen on the feminine characters in Attwell's work and is likely to have been well known to the viewer of this newsreel. Whilst no doubt intended to be amusing or endearing, the juxtaposition of the boy's male identity with this feminine, oversized object, also serves to undermine Attwell's artistic position. It suggests that she is forced to make-do with the resources she has available to her; an idea which is more in keeping with an amateur rather than a professional artist.

In addition to this, rather than showing Attwell in a studio which is associated with artistic production, the scenes in the newsreel all take place in a garden. The incompatibility of this site with artistic production emphasises the fact that Attwell's work takes place around her children's lives and occurs in the domesticity of the home. The garden also emphasises

Attwell's maternal position due to its connections to cultivation and domestication. Not only does this outside space offer her children a place to play, but the garden, like child rearing, requires a figure to control it. Someone must cut back roses and tend to the flower beds in a similar manner to a mother figure caring for her child, a connection which has led Sandra Dinter to argue that the two concepts are ideologically connected.[80] The fact that by the 1920s many elements of gardening would have been deemed a women's responsibility makes this even more pertinent.[81] It means that within the newsreel Attwell is surrounded by responsibilities beside her painting, placing her poster art within the wider realm of activities constructed as feminine.

Attwell's maternal focus is entrenched by the final scene of the newsreel. Here her young son 'Peter' ruins a painting she has been working on by covering it with dark paint. The intertitle preceding this scene foreshadows this event. It states that '"Peter" had a few strokes of his own to add to the next painting!' constructing a narrative that resembles a humorous mishap in a comedy film. The scene itself is also structured around comedy elements and relies on comedic timing for its success. The first few seconds of the clip show Attwell working on a canvas. She then stands up and walks away from her painting exiting the left side of the shot. Seconds later Peter appears from the bottom right and walks slowly towards the now abandoned work. After looking around him Peter sits in his mother's chair and uses a paintbrush he finds on the ground to cover her work in paint. Peter then looks innocently towards the camera as if proud of the image he has created and the film ends before a viewer sees Attwell's response.

Despite Attwell's absence for much of it, this scene is perhaps the most significant part of the newsreel. The obviously staged shot takes up a third of the newsreel's running

[80] Sandra Dinter, 'Spatial Inscriptions of Childhood: Transformations of the Victorian Garden in The Secret Garden, Tom's Midnight Garden, and The Poison Garden', *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*, 40:3, 2015, 218.
[81] Anne Meredith, "Horticultural Education in England, 1900-40: Middle-Class Women and Private Gardening Schools", *Garden History,* 31:1, 2003, 67–79.

time (1 minute of the total 3 minutes and 8 seconds) and thus undermines Attwell's presence in the film. This is exacerbated by the inconsequential damaging of the painting, which implies that Attwell's art is unimportant, disposable, or at least secondary to her child rearing responsibilities. The event is presented as an unfortunate consequence of working as both an artist and mother, while the blame is squarely centred on Attwell for leaving her art materials unattended.

Other poster artists were also discussed in relation to their children. A short photo caption about Anna and Doris Zinkeisen's studios in *The Bystander* discussed how both worked at home, where Anna Zinkeisen 'has a small and adoring daughter named Julia' and Doris Zinkeisen 'has three children'.[82] Such descriptions indicate that the presumed compatibility between poster art and motherhood were perceived as important, making the work a socially acceptable one. Thus, it is my argument that it was this, coupled with the increasing demands for poster design and its status as an applied art, that led to its promotion to women. It would seem that the poster offered a solution to the problems facing the male art world at the time, offering an artistic arena into which women could channel their skills without undermining male artistic dominance or their own duties as women.

'THE PLEASANTEST KIND OF ART'

The above arguments have demonstrated that the promotion of poster art to women was based largely on a belief that this would offer a 'defence' against their infringement on the male art world and position them separately from other (male) artists. In this way poster art followed many other areas of art and design during the early twentieth century, including textile production, pottery making, and interior design. Unlike these other areas, however, poster art gained an unexpected level of artistic prestige as the era went on. By the 1920s it

[82] Anon., 'Anna Zinkeisen and her Boxers', *The Bystander,* 9th August 1939.

was widely agreed that the poster was a legitimate art form, and this gave its producers considerable artistic status; a status that male artists probably did not consider when encouraging women to move into this field.

In 1933 the critic Frank Rutter acknowledged the poster's growing importance within Britain. In his autobiography, *Art in My Time* he claimed

> the whole nation is much less affected by what pictures are shown in the Royal Academy than by what posters are put up on the hoardings. A few thousand see the first but the second are seen by millions. The art galleries of the People are not in Bond Street, but are to be found in every railway station.[83]

Rutter's claims point to both the artistic status of poster art and to the public's awareness of the works. The statistics support his statements. 2,395,500,000 journeys were made on the London Underground in 1928, suggesting that thousands of travellers would have seen the posters displayed on Underground platforms, escalators, and inside the trains themselves.[84] Meanwhile in 1930, 813,924,962 journeys took place on the Big Four railways, again allowing thousands of individual passengers to view 'the carefully constructed panels… built along the platforms' to display posters.[85] Not only were these figures substantial, but they were also notably higher than those visiting the RA Summer Exhibition, where visitor numbers reached 137,070 in 1929 and 150,116 in 1930.[86]

[83] Frank Rutter, *Art in My Time*, London 1933, 249.
[84] Underground Advert, 'The Audience's the Thing', *The Era*, 4th September 1929.
[85] Phillip Chandler, 'The "Hoardings" of London', *The Poster,* October 1924, 31; Anon., '40 Million more go by Rail', *Derby Daily Telegraph*, 2nd April 1930, 1.
[86] 'The Royal Academy Summer Exhibition: A Chronicle, 1769-2018', https://chronicle250.com/1929 https://chronicle250.com/1930 (accessed January 2020)

Given Rutter's claim it would appear that, not only did poster art offer women a means of using their creative skills in a professional role, but it also offered them remarkable and largely unrivalled opportunities to participate in the world of art. The popularity and dominance of poster art led many women (and men) to enter into the production of posters during this period and such active entrance is important to consider. Although this popularity does not explain why poster art was initially marketed toward women artists, it does explain their continued presence in this field and the notable promotion of this work by women-led publications such as *Vote*. Acknowledging women artists' interest in poster art also provides insight into the independence and agency of these women, something which is often denied within scholarship. For this reason, in the final part of this chapter I will consider some of the reasons why women artists embraced poster art so willingly and asses how these factors helped establish women's presence in this industry.

Firstly, it is important to note that the poster was always tied to woman's artistic production even before it was sanctioned or promoted in this way by men. Campaigning groups such as the Woman's Social and Political Union (WSPU) and the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) used poster art to considerable effect in their campaigns during the 1900s and 1910s.[87] Posters displaying the campaigns' messages were posted around cities and towns, displayed in shop windows and even used in 'poster parades' in which the posters were paraded down streets on sandwich boards.[88] This use created clear connections between the poster and women's art, even before the true extent of poster advertising had been recognised.

The posters produced by the suffrage campaign were created by trained artists who, according to Tickner, 'would have been aware of posters as objects of connoisseurship' and

[87] Information on such posters can be found in Lisa Tickner, *The Spectacle of Women*, Chicago, 1988 and Miranda Garrett and Zoë Thomas, *Suffrage and the Arts: Visual Culture, Politics and Enterprise*, London, 2018.
[88] Poster parades were discussed regularly in suffragette papers in articles such as. Anon., 'A Poster Parade', *Votes for Women,* 21st January 1910, n/p; Anon., 'W.F.L. Poster Parade', *Vote,* 8th April 1914, n/p; Anon. 'Successful Poster Parade', *Common Cause,* 31st October 1913, 516.

therefore produced their posters as works of art. [89] One notable example of this is Mary Lowndes' (1857 – 1929) 1912 poster *Justice at the Door* (fig. 29). In this poster the recognisable figure of Justice is depicted outside the door of the House of Commons, apparently unable to enter it because of her gender. Lowndes uses conventional iconography to depict this figure, including a sword, blindfold, and scales, which are clutched under the figure's arm. Such imagery had two notable benefits. Firstly, it aided a viewer's understanding of the poster and negated the need for long pieces of explanatory text. Secondly, the use of established artistic imagery reduced the visual threat of the poster and made its political message more appealing to the public. This would have made it more likely that viewers would support the cause promoted and reduced the chances of disgruntled viewers destroying or removing the work from its public display.

Moving beyond its use of established imagery, Lowndes' poster also features further artistic connections. Lowndes' depiction of the brightly clothed figure of justice against an antique grey door relates the poster to paintings and drawings of other allegorical and mythical figures by the Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones (1833 – 1898). As in Burne-Jones' images Lowndes' figure of Justice appears statue-like and is framed by the doorway, like a statue in an alcove. Again, such similarities point to the suffragettes' use of established visual culture to promote their campaign in a visually acceptable manner. However, they also demonstrate Lowndes' own unique artistic style. Lowndes' art outside the suffrage atelier was in stained glass making, an art form also practiced by Burne-Jones. It therefore seems likely that Lowndes was inspired by Burne-Jones' work throughout her career, using his art as inspiration for her own.

Despite the artistic status of posters like those of Lowndes, suffrage posters are rarely discussed in scholarship on poster art. This is most likely a result of the complex and uneasy

[89] Tickner, *Spectacle of Women*, 48.

position that suffrage posters hold in discussions of the poster's history. Many poster scholars remain unwilling to acknowledge the medium's role within the vote campaign as to do so requires admitting that major male poster artists produced works opposing the female vote. Such an admittance goes against the eulogization of the poster artist often seen in poster scholarship, which is used to underpin the importance of poster research. As a result, on the rare occasions that suffrage or anti-suffrage posters are discussed their significance is largely diminished and their artistic value is downplayed in an attempt to distance an artist from the cause.

A particularly notable example of the downplaying of suffrage poster art can be found in the 2020 biography of John Hassall by Lucinda Gosling.[90] In this book Gosling is confronted with the issue of anti-suffrage posters, due to Hassall producing some of the most famous posters of the campaign. One of the most famous of these was *A Suffragette's Home* which was produced by Hassall in around 1910 (fig. 30). This poster depicts the problems facing family life if women were to gain political freedom.[91] It features a masculine figure who returns home from work to an empty house, save for two small children who are huddled asleep by the table. A banner on the wall reads 'votes for women' and on top of it is pinned a small scrap of paper which reads 'Back in an Hour or so', indicating that the masculine figure's wife has gone to a suffragette rally, leaving the home cold and unwelcoming.[92] Other elements of the depicted room emphasise the problems with this and point towards a degradation of female responsibility. These include the unlit candle which appears to have burned out, the empty dinner table and the holes in the children's socks.

Despite the clear meaning of the poster, Gosling attempts to distance Hassall from its message and refuses to accept his complicity in this campaign. Gosling claims that 'what

[90] Lucinda Gosling, *John Hassall Life and Art of the Poster King,* London, 2021.
[91] Ibid, 139.
[92] Ibid, 138.

Hassall's own views were on the suffrage question is difficult to fathom. There is no firm indication he was against giving women the vote' before going on to suggest that 'it is likely this was simply another commission for Hassall'.[93] While such a claim could be true it appears to overlook the autonomy of Hassall in taking on this commission and his commitment to producing multiple works for the anti-suffrage campaign. Hassall was a successful and widely known artist by the 1910s and would not have been reliant on the money offered by this work. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that he felt some affinity with the anti-suffrage cause. Moreover, Hassall's inclusion of his — by now highly recognisable — signature at the centre of this poster suggests his personal endorsement of these ideas as well as his willingness to be associated with them.

Distancing artists such as Hassall from their anti-suffrage poster art is problematic. Doing so separates these posters from other forms of poster art and downplays their artistic significance. This has an inordinate impact on the women producing suffrage posters as it separates their works from artistic discussions and prevents a consideration of their artistic importance. Moreover, this downplaying diminishes the importance of suffrage culture to the later poster movement, leading to the belief that the women working in this arena during the 1920s and 1930s were doing so without history or context. We have limited records of the professional relationships between poster artists and so we have no way of knowing whether the skills developed by suffragette artists such as Lowndes were actively passed down to the younger generation. Whether they were or not, it seems reasonable to assume that the existence of suffrage works provided some foundations on which aspiring women artists managed to build their own success in poster production.

Moving beyond the historic precedent for women's involvement, poster art also offered considerable opportunity to develop artistic fame, making it unsurprising that women

[93] Ibid, 139.

were drawn to the field in such high numbers. The companies commissioning poster design recognised this. For example, the GPO altered the amount of pay an artist received based on the benefit the publicity work would offer them. The committee sectioned the artists they employed into three brackets. 'First class artists with nothing to gain in reputation from the use of their designs by the post office', received the highest payment which was deemed to compensate them for their work.[94] Meanwhile, a middle-level payment was given to 'established artists who would profit by having their designs published by the post office', while the lowest remuneration was given to 'young artists and beginners' for whom it was considered poster work could elevate or kick start their career.[95]

In line with this payment system there are a number of examples in which producing poster art clearly aided a woman artist's career. In the early 1920s Burroughes produced two posters for London Transport advertising London Zoo. Both posters were well received by the public and the press, with particular attention paid to her 1922 poster *For the Zoo* (fig. 31), which was widely praised. For example, an article published in *Commercial Art* stated that 'Miss Burroughes is a magician, who by the simple, though difficult device, of elimination, and by means of her unerring colour-sense, can transform an ugly little brute and a sad little captive into an aristocrat of the Simian tribe'.[96] Meanwhile, Percy Bradshaw wrote 'Burroughes is a born poster artist, who though she had derived a great deal of inspiration from the Japanese, has added her own delightful grace and humour'. [97] Not only did the success of these posters lead to these positive reports in the press, but it also aided Burroughes' career in fine art. In 1923 Burroughes held her first solo show at the Dorian Leigh Gallery in South Kensington. Those reviewing the exhibition related it to Burroughes' work in poster design. London paper *The Sketch* described Burroughes as a 'poster artist'

[94] POST 33/5253, Poster Advisory Group, 27th June 1934.
[95] Ibid.
[96] Anon., 'Our Plates', *Commercial Art,* August 1923, 235.
[97] Percy Bradshaw, 'The British Society of Poster Designers', *Commercial Art,* July 1928, 92.

who was now showing drawings at the gallery, while an article which ran in local papers — including the *Gloucester Citizen* and the *Coventry Evening Telegraph* — suggested that 'those who have watched the transformation of London hoardings and railway stations by the new advertisement art' would be interested in the exhibition.[98]

Poster art also offered the opportunity for artists to have their designs purchased by members of the public. Although they did not benefit economically from these sales (as the company who commissioned the poster retained rights to these works) this was again helpful in promoting an artist's profile. Many companies sold copies of their most popular posters, by responding to written requests for specific works. However, London Transport went one step further and set up a shop at 55 Broadway London (St James Park Station) to sell posters to the public.[99] In this store posters were sold for around 2 shillings, with many selling out completely within days.[100] On average around 15 per cent of a poster's print run was put to sale (around 150 for a typical print run of 1000), although for popular works print runs could be increased to suit demands.[101] For example Arnrid Johnston's poster *From the Ark to Regents Park* was so popular in 1931 that 300 copies were sold to members of the public, one of the largest runs of all time.[102]

Newspapers and magazines encouraged poster sales by instructing members of the public how to display the works. In 1935, the *Western Morning News* ran an article which informed readers of the 'new and most attractive posters of the Westcountry' which 'have strong decorative qualities and would look well put into plain wooden frames and hung in a modern room against a neutral background'.[103] Similarly, in the *Staffordshire Sentinel,* Olivia

[98] Anon., 'General Notes', *The Sketch*, 9th May 1923, n/p; Anon., 'One Woman Show', *Gloucester Citizen*, 4th May 1923; Anon., 'A Poster Exhibition', *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 4th May 1923, n/p.
[99] Advert, *Modern Publicity,* 1937, n/p.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Margaret Rossoff, 'Art for the People', *Print*, 51:3, 1997, 78-85.
[102] Claire Dobbin, 'Art for All? The Reception of Underground Posters', *London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design*, David Bownes and Oliver Green (ed), 211 – 232, 227.
[103] Anon., 'Our London Letter', *Western Morning News*, 19th July 1935, 8.

Westbrook discussed the value of posters as decoration for a person's home.[104] She described how works could be 'set in commanding positions on the walls' and noted specifically how 'picture maps which certain advertisers' issue' could be used in children's playrooms or nurseries, as 'children will spend hours examining the queer little people, the animals, machinery, boats and buildings' depicted in these works.[105] Although not specified it seems likely that the 'picture maps' described by Westbrook were posters by Perry who produced a number of poster maps during her career. These included a series for London Transport which were displayed in 1929, the same year as this article was published.

While the sales of individual posters may not have benefitted artists economically, other elements of poster production did. As noted in Chapter One, poster art could be a lucrative career for women, offering freelance artists equal pay to their male counterparts. Such payments were not available in the world of fine art where women's work was generally priced lower than their male colleagues, in an attempt to maintain male prestige. The minutes of meetings at GPO and London Transport demonstrate the equal pay scale in place, with artists being ranked on their reputation rather than their gender. While some scholars have suggested that this still inevitably led to pay gaps, as a result of entrenched gender biases, documentary evidence proves this not to be the case.[106] For example, London Transport minutes for the 15th October 1937, suggest that the artists Jonathon Foss, Betty Ward, and D'Arcy Thompson, were all paid the same amount for their London Transport posters, in keeping with their status as students still attending art school.[107] Similarly, Edgar Ainsworth (1905 – 1975) and Vanessa Bell were paid £52 by the GPO in recognition of their status as 'first class artists'.[108]

[104] Anon.,'Wall decorations Strike a New Note', *Staffordshire Sentinel*, 21st November 1929, 9.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Edelstein, *Art for All*, 114.
[107] LT 606/011 Minutes of Vice Chairman's publicity meeting 15th October 1937.
[108] POST 33/5253 Posters, artists, fees, and Printing costs.

Beyond equal payments, poster art also offered women the opportunity to earn higher amounts than fine-art production. This made poster work particularly appealing to those who relied on their art for economic stability. At a time when women exhibiting their work at the Women's International Art Club (WIAC) typically received between £10 and £35 for a painting, women poster artists could expect to receive between £5 and £15 for a smaller double crown poster (30 x 20 inches) and £20 to £65 for a large poster design.[109] In addition to this, unlike the field of fine art where artists were required to produce paintings or artworks with the hope of selling them at exhibition, the world of poster art worked on a commission basis. This meant that a poster had already been requested and a price agreed before it was produced, making the production costs and the time spent less of a gamble for an artist.

Finally, it is important to note that poster art offered substantial creative opportunities for women artists. The new status of the poster as a largely unexplored medium meant that it was free of the restrictions associated with established art forms and could therefore be produced in a variety of styles or subject to artistic experimentation. This was noted at the time. The critic Roger Fry claimed that because a poster was 'not a very expensive object' it was more open to 'risks' than other art forms and therefore 'holds out opportunities of a kind that are all too rare in modern life'.[110] Such opportunities would have been particularly appealing to women artists, who traditionally faced restriction on the art they could produce. According to Deepwell, women made up just 10% of abstract and surrealist exhibitions during the interwar period.[111] This meant that women were largely prevented from gaining success in these modernist styles — especially if they were reliant on their art for economic stability.

[109] Katy Deepwell, *Women Artists Between the War,* Manchester, 2010, 197; POST 33/5253; LT 606/08, Minutes of Vice Chairman's publicity meeting 24th October 1935.
[110] Roger Fry, 'Art and Commerce', (1926, Hogarth Press) in *Journal of Cultural Economics,* 22, 1998, 49-59, 59
[111] Deepwell, *Women Artists,* 323.

The potential for artistic exploration when practicing poster art will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. It is however useful to identify a couple of examples of this here. In 1935 Perry produced the poster *Cup Final* (fig. 32) for London Transport, in which she used bus and tram tickets to create an image of three figures playing football. This use of mixed media followed the growing interest in collage amongst modern artists, who were inspired by Pablo Picasso (1881 – 1973) and George Braque's (1882 – 1963) Cubist work of the 1910s. Perry utilised the original appearance of the tickets to create her poster, and in this way followed the principles of collage — in which materials provide 'function and meaning' to a work.[112] This is most notable in Perry's use of striped tickets to create the separate football strips of the players, positioning the stripes horizontally and vertically according to their placement on the body.

In line with the traditions of collage, the tickets Perry features in her poster appear to have been used in real life. This use is signified by the stamps which can be seen on some of the tickets, such the one used to represent the leg of the furthest figure. Viewers of Perry's poster are likely to have been familiar with these tickets and the stamps, using them on their own travels on the Underground or by bus. The ticket's appearance would therefore create an instant connection between London Transport and the cup final. Such connections decreased the importance of the text at the bottom of the poster and ensured that even those viewing the poster quickly could understand the message it was relaying.

Margaret Bradley's (dates unknown) 1939 poster for the SR (fig. 33) is another example of experimentation in poster art. Bradley appears to have been inspired by Surrealism when producing this poster, using uncanny and dreamlike imagery to advertise the SR's overnight services between London and Paris. Bradley's poster is a complex image in which different artistic styles are layered onto one another. This helps to evoke the

[112] Renée Riese Hubert, 'Patch and Paradox in Joseph Cornell's Art', Jeanine Parisier Plottel (ed), *Collage,* New York, 1983, 167– 79.

disconcerting nature of overnight travel, where a person can fall asleep in one location (or in this case country) and wake up in another. Bradley's use of this layering technique is most notable at the centre of the image where two mask-like faces join to form a heart. Each face is adorned with topographic symbols of Paris and London — the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomphe, Big Ben, and London Bridge — which are drawn in a detailed style not seen in any other part of the poster. At the centre of these faces, where their edges appear to overlap, Bradley includes another layer of imagery. This layer features a lozenge shaped cruise liner which appears to unite the images in the same way a journey on a real cruise liner would unite the cities. This imagery also relates to other Surrealist artworks such as Paul Nash's *Harbour and Room* (1932, Tate Modern) in which images intersect one another in a manner which replicates a dream.

The artistic possibilities offered by poster art were so substantial that women artists used them to promote the medium to other women. The most notable example of this can be seen in an interview with the artist Gladys Peto, in which she encouraged aspiring artists to focus their attention on poster art in order to take advantage of 'the wide scope for originality, for inventive skill', this medium offered.[113] Peto's description of the poster as the 'El Dorado' of the woman with talent for it asserted these arguments, as did her discussion of the enjoyment she gained from poster art.[114] These statements, coupled with the articles' title, which focused on the promotion of 'poster art for girls', established the medium as one of opportunity and artistic potential. [115]

[113] George Wade, 'Poster-Art Work for Girls: A talk with Miss Gladys Peto, the Well-known Artist', *The Empire Annual for Girls*, 1920, 197-200, 199.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid.

A New Field of Artistic Practice

The promotion of poster art to women artists is one of the most notable issues discussed within poster scholarship and is the one of the only times poster art produced by women has been focused on in writing. Interest in this subject stems not only from the fact that it resulted in the induction of high numbers of women into this industry, but also because it contradicted wider employment practices which remained hostile to women workers. In order to explain these facts, scholars have routinely argued that the promotion of women's employment in poster art was directly tied to a wider desire to attract and appeal to the female consumer, a perspective which has privileged the poster's status as an advert and related women poster artists to the wider world of women in advertising.

In this chapter I have questioned the established arguments surrounding this subject and demonstrated that the promotion of poster art to women was actually more complex than it may originally appear. Although the connections between women and advertising were certainly important and laid the foundations for women's employment in this industry, the differences between the poster and other advertising prevent these from being a sufficient explanation. Indeed, it was the poster's status as a new field of artistic practice that ultimately led to the call for women artists, as the poster was deemed a solution to the 'woman problem' facing the art world. This, coupled with the artistic appeal of the poster, led to the large number of women artists working and gaining success in this field.

In the process of finding an explanation for women's involvement in poster art in this chapter I have also attempted to assert the autonomy of the women involved in this industry. Doing so prevents an assumption that women artists entered poster production solely because they were encouraged to do so by men. As noted in Chapter One, poster art offered numerous benefits to women artists and as a result held considerable appeal. These benefits included the

ability to garner fame and artistic notoriety through the production of poster art, the opportunity to make more money through poster art than fine-art production, and the chance to experiment with artistic styles.

Finally, this chapter has drawn attention to the issues and generalisations that are present in current poster scholarship. I have argued that the tendency to discuss posters in highly illustrated books has led to inadequate understandings of the poster and has resulted in complex issues being simplified. Not only has this led to the inaccurate assumption that women's poster production was directly linked to the female consumer, but it has also resulted in insufficient analysis of suffragette posters and of the poster's artistic significance. In addition to this, generalised assumptions surrounding the woman poster artist have meant that there has been no enquiry into the types of women able to pursue a career in this field. This is something I aim to rectify in the next chapter, building on the ideas of accessibility to question whether the poster art industry was open to all women during this time.

CHAPTER THREE: THE ACCESSIBILITY OF POSTER ART

In 1920 the artist Gladys Peto was interviewed by George Wade for the yearly children's publication *The Empire Annual for Girls*.[1] The resultant article, which I mentioned briefly at the end of the previous chapter was, in many ways, a typical celebration of artistic success. In it Wade heralded Peto as a uniquely talented individual and celebrated her production of poster art for well-known companies such as the LNER and Allensbury Foods. He then stressed the popularity of her work, which he claimed, 'attracts much public attention' when shown on the hoardings and referred to Peto as one of 'the best known depicters of "fashionable life"'. In addition to this, Wade also noted the benefits fame had given Peto. He stated that she made 'an annual income which many men in very high positions might well envy' and asserted that this allowed her to own a studio in the wealthy London district of Kensington. [2]

However, in addition to being a celebration of Peto's achievements, another more surprising narrative also ran through the *Empire Annual* interview. Throughout the text Peto emphasised the potential for other 'girls' to follow her success in poster art, minimising her own achievements in the process. Peto asserted that 'what I have been able to do many other girls could do in similar ways' and argued that she 'had no special advantages over what most girls have'. [3] She also provided evidence of these claims. Peto highlighted the fact that she had not come from an artistic family and did not receive artistic training as a child. [4] Instead she claims that she learned to draw people while riding in her 'father's trap' where she 'used

[1] George Wade, 'Poster-Art Work for Girls: A talk with Miss Gladys Peto, the Well-known Artist', *The Empire Annual for Girls*, 1920, 197-200.
[2] Ibid 197.
[3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid.

to notice uncommon types of folk' which she would reproduce in sketchbooks at home.[5] The skills she developed in these sketchbooks led her to study for eighteen months at Maidenhead Art School and then at an art school in London, before taking her drawings to editors and commissioners in an attempt to gain work in commercial art. [6] She pursued these activities with limited support from her family, who apparently made 'discouraging queries' about her plans for a career in art. [7]

Beyond being an unusual perspective for an artist to take, Peto's claims that 'many other girls' could follow her achievements raise important questions around women artists' participation in poster art. Peto's description of her journey into this work indicates that the industry was accessible to all aspiring women artists, regardless of their early life and social status. Such an idea contrasts notably with current understandings of fine art, which is generally presented in scholarship as being the remit of women with considerable social, economic, and cultural capital. In this chapter I will consider this theory, comparing Peto's claims of accessibility to the limitations discussed by scholars such as Deborah Cherry and Katy Deepwell. [8] In doing so I will establish whether a career in poster art was attainable in a way that a career in fine art was not.

In order to explore the accessibility of poster art in detail, in this chapter I will compare the industry to three aspects of fine-art practice, all of which are routinely returned to by scholars when discussing women's access to artistic careers. The first, is the need for aspiring women artists to hold family connections to the art world which allowed them to gain entry into spaces associated with artistic production. The second is the need for fine-art artists to have been raised in middle-class families and enjoy economic stability which could be used to support their artistic endeavours. Finally, the third factor is the necessity for fine-

[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid, 198.
[7] Ibid, 197.
[8] Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artist,* London, 1993; Katy Deepwell, *Women Artists between the Wars: 'A Fair Field and No Favour'*, Manchester University Press, 2010.

art artists to have a studio in which to work, allowing them the privacy and freedom required for artistic creativity and success.

Family Connections to the Art World

Many scholars believe that possessing family connections to the art world was one of the most notable determiners of a woman's ability to achieve artistic success. Cherry and Maria Quirk have both argued that this was because such links could facilitate a woman's entrance into the often heavily policed arenas of this industry, whilst also offering the aspiring woman artist the status and legitimacy needed to gain acceptance in these spaces.[9] In addition to this, scholars have noted that coming from an artistic family aided a woman's artistic education.[10] Artistic parents were often more accepting of their daughter attending art school than those outside the industry (as seen in Peto's example). Meanwhile others provided their daughters with artistic training through their own domestic atelier — where parents could pass on their artistic knowledge in an attempt to continue, or develop, the family business. [11]

Several women poster artists were born into artistic families, indicating that family connections may also have held some benefit to those hoping to gain a career in poster art. A number of these women were the daughters of successful artists. For example, Betty Swanwick was the daughter of Gerard Swanwick who began painting marine watercolours following his time in the navy, while Cathleen Sabine Mann (1896 – 1959) was the daughter of portrait artists, Harrington Mann, and Florence Sabine Pasley. [12] In other instances, connections to the art world came from beyond the parental unit. Margaret Calkin James' maternal grandfather was the artist Penry Powell Palfrey who was well known for his

[9] Cherry, *Painting women,* 19-52*;* Maria Quirk, *Women, Art and Money in England, 1880-1914: The Hustle and the Scramble*, London 2019, 12.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Cherry, *Painting Women*, 20-21.
[12] Paddy Rossmore, *Betty Swanwick: Artist and Visionary,* London, 2008, n/p; Anon., *Votes for Women – Cathleen Sabine Mann*, https://nationalmotormuseum.org.uk/votes-for-women/ (accessed October 2018).

paintings of equestrian subject matter and his production of stained-glass windows during the second half of the nineteenth century. [13] Similarly, Pamela Colman Smith's (1878 – 1951) maternal grandfather was the illustrator Samuel Colman (1780 – 1845) while her uncle was the American painter Samuel Colman (1832 – 1920). [14] In her book on Colman Smith, Elizabeth Foley O'Connor acknowledges the impact these men may have had on the young Colman Smith. Foley O'Connor states that 'it is likely that Colman Smith saw these [her uncle's] paintings during visits to her Brooklyn relatives, if not through direct interaction with her uncle' and suggests that these works may have inspired her own practice.[15]

Artistic lineage is likely to have had some effect on these artists, offering them insight into the world of artistic production and perhaps inspiring their own desire to pursue an artistic career. Such an influence would have been particularly notable for a woman whose parents conducted their artistic production from within the family home. Rhoda Dawson (1897 – 1992) recalled her experiences as the daughter of artists Edith (1862 – 1929) and Nelson Dawson (1859 – 1941) in an article written for *Apollo* magazine in 1988.[16] Here Dawson described visits to her parents' workrooms at their house on Manresa Road. She recalls

> usually going into Edith's workroom first. One remembers her sitting there, cutting out gold foil, or grinding colours or putting on the raw enamel usually with a nib in a penholder; or standing in front of the furnace with her tongs, putting in a tray of small pieces of shaped copper, to be mounted as pendants or brooches when finished.[17]

[13] Betty Miles, 'Margaret Calkin James: Designer Calligrapher and Painter', *Women Designing : Redefining Design in Britain between the Wars*, Jill Seddon and Suzette Worden, Brighton, 1994, 115-123, 116.
[14] Elizabeth Foley O'Connor, *Pamela Colman Smith: Artist, Feminist, and Mystic*, South Carolina, 2021, 29.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Rhoda Bickerdike, 'The Dawsons: An Equal Partnership of Artists', *Apollo*, 128:321, 1988, 320-325.
[17] Ibid, 323.

Holding such a detailed insight into the world of art seems to have been so influential on Dawson that she decided to pursue her own artistic career, producing both painting and poster work. This was despite early warnings from her mother against becoming an artist, due to the hours and labour involved. [18]

While Dawson's example demonstrates an aspiring poster artist gaining insight into the world of artistic production through her family's efforts, there is no evidence of an artist being taught the skills of poster art from within the family home. The family 'atelier' does not appear to have existed in the poster world, most likely a result of the infancy of poster production and its ever-changing technology. Many of the artists creating posters during the 1910s, 1920s, and even 1930s, were the first generation to produce this art form. They were therefore unable to inherit skills from parents or mentors, removing at least one of the advantages associated with an artistic family.

In line with this, the closest example of a family legacy in poster art is that of Vera and Althea Willoughby (1904 –1982), a mother and daughter who both produced posters for London Transport. While Vera Willoughby (1873 – 1939) did not provide her daughter's artistic training (Althea Willoughby attended the Royal College of Art during the 1920s), she may have stimulated her daughter's career by putting her name forward for a commission. [19] Vera Willoughby worked for London Transport five years before Althea Willoughby, producing posters such as *General Joy* in 1928. During this time she may well have introduced her daughter to the company, allowing Althea Willoughby to secure her first commission in 1933.

If Vera Willoughby did put her daughter's name forward in this way her actions were not without precedent. There are numerous examples of individuals suggesting colleagues,

[18] Ibid.
[19] David Buckman, *Artists in Britain Since 1945,* Vol 2, M to Z, London, 2006.

relatives, or friends for future poster work. As I noted in Chapter One, Vanessa Bell's commission for the GPO was organised by her husband Clive Bell, who mentioned his wife's desire to produce a poster to the head of the GPO poster committee, Stephen Tallents. [20] Meanwhile, in a 1935 meeting of the GPO poster committee, the committee member 'Mr Parsons mentioned that a relative of his, Miss Jacynth Parsons, was an artist' and arranged for her work to be considered for future commissions.[21] Similarly, in a 1983 interview with historian Oliver Green the artist Thomas Eckersley (1886 – 1959) recalled the networks of friends and acquaintances that helped him to gain commissions for London Transport during the early years of his career. [22]

Beyond familial connections to the art world, scholars have also noted the advantages that marriage to a fellow artist could offer a woman pursuing a career in fine art. Quirk has argued that such marriages enabled a woman to exist in artistic circles and 'ensured that a woman was not isolated, physically and psychically, from artistic society'. [23] Similarly, Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle De Courtivron have noted that artistic partnerships could lead to collaboration and development to the advantage of both artists — provided both were willing to bypass traditional gender expectations.[24] A number of poster artists were married to artists, suggesting that similar benefits were available in the world of poster art. For example, Gwen Raverat was married to the French painter Jacques Raverat, Mabel Attwell was married to the artist and illustrator Harold Earnshaw (1886 – 1937), Ethel Gabain to John Copley (1875 – 1950), Mary Adshead to Stephen Bone (1904 – 1958), and Laura Knight to Harold Knight (1874 – 1961).[25]

[20] POST 33/5137, Vanessa Bell Commission.
[21] POST 33/5253, Poster Advisory Group 20th August 1935.
[22] TFL 2016/681, Interview with Tom Eckersley, 1983.
[23] Quirk, *Women, Art and Money*, 50.
[24] Whitney Chadwick and Isabelle de Courtivron, *Significant Others: Creativity and Intimate Partnership,* London, 2018, 9-11.
[25] Christopher Riches and Michael Cox, 'Raverat Gwen' in *A Dictionary of Writers and their Works*, Oxford, 2015; H. C. G Matthew, Brian Harrison (eds) *Oxford dictionary of national biography,* Vol. 2*,* Oxford, 2004, 883–885; John Copley, *John Copley & Ethel Gabain,* London, 1985; Sally Hunter, 'Obituary: Mary Adshead', *The Independent*, 06 September 1995; Laura Knight, *Oil Paint and Grease Paint*, London, 1936.

What is notable amongst these names is that the women listed above can generally be classified as part-time or celebrity poster artists, in line with the categories I established and deployed in Chapter One. These women put considerable focus on their fine-art careers and worked hard to exhibit paintings in galleries and sell works. It is therefore unsurprising that they would have sought the marital benefits identified by Quirk, Chadwick and De Courtivron and that these may have facilitated their careers. In contrast, the absence of the names of full-time poster artists in this list suggest that the social benefits of marriage may have been less significant within the industry of poster art, where women were able to develop their careers without the assistance of male contacts. Indeed, when it comes to full-time poster artists the majority (including Dora Batty, Herry Perry, Irene Fawkes, Freda Beard, and Freda Lingstrom) remained unmarried throughout their lives. This indicates that they themselves were able to create the necessary social or professional connections and were not reliant on a husband to boost their status.

There was only one notable marriage between poster artists: that of Rosemary (1910 – 1998) and Clifford Ellis (1907 – 1985).[26] In this case the couple's relationship expanded into artistic collaboration, suggesting it was mutually beneficial to both parties. The couple met in 1928 at the Regent Street Polytechnic, where Rosemary Ellis (then Collinson) was a student and Clifford Ellis was working as a tutor. [27] Following their marriage in 1931, the Ellises worked together on all their poster art, co-signing their works. [28] It is a sign of the patriarchal nature of poster history that this co-signing has at times led to Rosemary Ellis' importance being overlooked in favour of her husband, who is typically viewed as the lead artist on their work.[29] Such a dismissal is inaccurate. When producing poster art, the Ellis' combined their

[26] David Bownes *C&RE - A modern couple who brought a new aesthetic to 1930s poster art,* 2018 https://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/blog/cre-modern-couple-who-brought-new-aesthetic-1930s-poster-art (accessed October 2018).
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid.
[29] For example, Emma Clegg, 'Making Art Matter: Clifford and Rosemary Ellis', *The Bath Magazine,* 2016 https://thebathmagazine.co.uk/making-art-matter-clifford-and-rosemary-ellis-exhibition-at-victoria-art-gallery/ (accessed March 2021).

talents and represented their collaboration in the order of their signatures, so that whoever led the poster signed their name first. [30] For example, the poster *Anglers Prefer Shell* produced for Shell Oil in 1934 is signed 'Rosemary and Clifford Ellis', in recognition of Rosemary Ellis' greater role. Likewise, the poster the couple produced for GPO in 1935, *Why Aren't We On The Telephone* is signed 'Clifford and Rosemary Ellis', in recognition of Clifford Ellis' greater role.

There were also other relationships that existed between poster artists, and it is important to consider these when discussing their lives. A large number of women poster artists formed friendships with one another, creating connections which mirrored familial bonds. The fact that women poster artists even knew each other has been almost entirely overlooked within studies of poster art history, with most of these women being presented as working independently within a male-dominated art world. This dismissal is in keeping with wider scholarship on women's art. Cherry notes that many nineteenth-century artists embarked on friendships which 'often lasted a lifetime' and were 'linked by emotional bonds, professional commitment to cultural production, and political commitment to equal rights to women'.[31] Meanwhile Zoë Thomas has argued that 'women were actively forming their own artistic networks' during the nineteenth century and claims that 'relationships that played out between these women and their various audiences were integral to the making of modern artistic culture'.[32] Despite this, such relationships are typically ignored within scholarship where they are viewed as secondary to heterosexual romantic bonds.

There were a number of spaces in which poster artists could embark or establish female friendships. For some, these were developed in art school, where artists met for the first time. Dorothy Newsome (c1900 – 1980) and Kathleen Nixon (1895 – 1988) met whilst

[30] Bownes *C&RE.*
[31] Cherry, *Painting Women,* 46, 50.
[32] Zoë Thomas, *Women Art Workers and the Arts and Crafts Movement*, Manchester, 2020, 18.

studying at Birmingham Art School during the 1910s.[33] Following their time as students they moved to Coventry and shared a studio at 32 Holyhead Road. Local Coventry press reports described the women as 'firm friends' and discussed their frequent collaborations and co-exhibitions. [34] The press also reported on the pairs' journeys to India, which in 1930 resulted in both artists gaining commissions to produce posters for India State Railways.[35] Another example of an art school friendship existed between Batty, Fawkes, and Gladys Barraclough (néee Thompson) (1885 – 1972) who met at Chelmsford School of Art during the early 1910s.[36] Perhaps as a result of this friendship all three women had moved to London by the early 1920s, where Batty and Fawkes shared a studio at Albert Studios in Battersea, and Fawkes lived with Barraclough and her husband James at 27 Carlyle Square.[37]

Another site for emerging friendships between women artists were exhibition spaces, which provided arenas in which many poster artists interacted. In some cases, the development of these friendships was encouraged by the exhibition organisers. According to Quirk, the Society of Women Artists (SWA) was focused on female friendship and aimed 'to form a collective artistic identity, from which they could draw a sense of belonging and camaraderie'. [38]-At least fifty-seven of the artists discussed in this thesis exhibited at the SWA, often participating in the same exhibitions.[39] For example, Attwell, Batty, Dorothy Burroughes, Fawkes, Eva Savory (1882 – 1938), and Dorothea Sharp (1874 – 1955) all exhibited in the 1924 exhibition, Adshead, Mary Koop (1884 – 1967), Mann, Sharp, and both Zinkeisen's exhibited in 1929 and Adshead, Olive-Grace Bourne (1897 – unknown), Alison Mckenzie, (dates unknown) and Savory all exhibited in 1933.[40]

[33] Anon., 'Coventry Girl Artists', *Coventry Evening Telegraph*, 15th May 1930, n/p.
[34] Anon., 'Coventry and District', *Coventry Herald*, 3rd January 1930, n/p.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Anon., 'Chelmsford Art Students Success', *Chelmsford Chronicle,* 5th September 1913, 3.
[37] London, England, Electoral Registers, 1925.
[38] Quirk, *Women*, *Art and Money*, 103.
[39] Charles Baile de Laperriere and Joanna Soden (eds), *The Society of Women Artists Exhibitors : a dictionary of Artists and their works in the Annual exhibition of the Society of Women Artists : 1855-1996*, Vols 1-3, London, 1996.
[40] Ibid.

Beyond the SWA, at least sixty-five women poster artists exhibited paintings at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, arguably the most prestigious site of this time. [41] Some of these women exhibited regularly, Dorothy Hutton exhibited at every RA exhibition between 1923 and 1935, whilst others such as Beard exhibited only once in 1920 (before her career in poster art had really begun). [42] Often the works of women poster artists were shown alongside one another at the RA exhibitions. In 1929 Knight and Anna Zinkiesen both had oil paintings displayed in room VIII. [43] While Knight and Ethel Gabain had oil paintings hung in gallery XI. Similarly, in 1927 Adshead exhibited an oil painting in gallery XI alongside Knight and Anna Zinkeisen. [44] Meanwhile, in 1924 Anna Zinkeisen's painting *Babette Hélène* was displayed directly next to a portrait of The Hon Mrs J Pease by Mann.[45]

The close displays of women artists' works are significant because they suggest that artists may have interacted with one another in these spaces. This would have been especially true during varnishing day, an event held at the beginning of the RA exhibition when artists would touch up their works ahead of the show itself. Reports of varnishing day discuss the socialising taking place during these events. In 1907 a reporter for the *Manchester Guardian* described the event as 'the biggest meeting for artists of the whole year and if it were for that alone it would be a pleasing affair'. [46] The reporter proceeds to note that 'little excursions are made to see and criticise one another's work and to arrange for little meetings' a claim that evokes the collegial atmosphere of the event.[47]

In some cases, the friendships formed at schools or exhibitions could develop into long term — or even lifetime — companionships between women. For example, in 1929 the poster artist Alma Faulkner moved in to Batty's apartment at 38 Albert Mansions, beginning

[41] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogues*, London, 1921-1939.
[42] Ibid.
[43] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue*, London, 1929.
[44] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue*, London, 1927.
[45] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue*, London, 1924.
[46] F L E, 'Varnishing Day at the Royal Academy', *Manchester Guardian,* 30 April 1907, n/p.
[47] Ibid.

an era of cohabitation that would continue until Batty's death in 1966. [48] The two women would go on to move at least twice more in this period, first to Hammersmith and then (following Batty's retirement from the Central School) to a cottage named Starlings in Heybridge Basin, Essex, just fifteen miles from where Batty was born.[49] The multiple moves made by Batty and Faulkner demonstrate the strength of their relationship. They also, when coupled with Batty's decision to bequeath all of her belongings and her house to Faulkner following her death (an amount which came to around £20,000) indicate that their relationship may have been more than platonic. [50]

It is not unusual for the status of relationships between women from this time to be unclear. Terry Castle has discussed the 'invisibility' of lesbian relationships in their book *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture* noting that the lesbian 'has been 'ghosted' — or made to seem invisible — by culture itself'.[51] Castle's comments reference the lack of evidence existing around lesbian relationships and the historic desire to dismiss those involved in one as 'spinsters' rather than consider the reality of their experiences, a situation that may well apply to Batty and Faulkner. In her more recent book *Disturbing Practices : History, Sexuality, and Women's Experience of Modern War* Laura Doan has also considered the difficulties involved in discussing or labelling female same sex desires or relationships.[52] Doan notes that during this time 'ordinary people did not generally name or self-name … women understood themselves and were perceived by others in relation to gender and class yet manifested little interest in, or seemed to have limited access to, the technologies or subjectivities of sexuality'.[53] Despite this, Doan also notes that an ignorance

[48] London, England, Electoral Registers 1929; London, England, Electoral Registers 1945.
[49] Last Will and Testament of Dora Margaret Batty Dated 19th December 1966.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Terry Castle, *The Apparitional Lesbian: Female Homosexuality and Modern Culture*, New Yorks, 1995.
[52] Laura Doan, *Disturbing Practices: History, Sexuality, and Women's Experience of Modern War*, Chicago, 2013.
[53] Ibid, 139.

to female sexuality within scholarship is highly problematic as this identity is 'an equally crucial aspect of human experience' as gender or class. [54]

In addition to Batty and Faulkner a number of other women poster artists appear to have embarked on female companionships which blurred the lines between friendship and desire. Such relationships somewhat resemble the category 'intimate friendships' used by Martha Vinicus to refer to friendships which 'took elements from two separate categories, romantic friendship and Sapphic sexuality, to fashion something new'.[55] One example of this is the relationship between poster artist Burroughs and the novelist Vere Hutchinson who lived together until Hutchinson's death in 1932. Despite being described as a 'close friendship' by the twentieth-century press, the relationship between these women has been reassessed in recent years.[56] For example, Emily Hamer includes the couple in her book *Britannia's Glory: A History of Twentieth-century Lesbians* noting that 'Vere and Budge', as they were known, were key members of Radclyffe Hall and Una Troubridge's social circle, where they 'kept the laughter and the gramophone going until the early hours'.[57] A romantic relationship is also in keeping with other aspects of these women's lives. Burroughs cared for Hutchinson in her later years when the former was paralysed following an illness during the mid 1920s.[58] Meanwhile Hutchinson left her money to Burroughs in her will in the same way as Batty and Faulkner.[59]

A third example of a notable female relationship involving a poster artist is that of Lingstrom, who lived with her companion and co-collaborator Maria Bird (1891 – 1979) for most of her life. [60] Lingstrom's adopted daughter has frequently denied the existence of a romantic relationship between these women, asserting that 'they certainly weren't lesbians,

[54] Ibid, 101.
[55] Martha Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women 1778-1928*, Chicago, 2004, xviii-xix.
[56] Anon., 'Woman Novelists Death', *Nottingham Evening Post*, 10th August 1932, n/p.
[57] Emily Hamer, *Britannia's Glory: A History of Twentieth-Century Lesbians*, London, 1996.
[58] Anon., 'Woman Novelists Death'.
[59] Last Will and Testament Vere Stuart Menteth Hutchinson, 27th October 1932.
[60] London, England Electoral Registers 1933.

that I can tell you'. [61] However, the account of Lingstrom and Bird's housekeeper, Shirley Boakes, raises questions around this statement. Boakes' assertion that the women were 'such good, good friends that did loads of stuff together, holidays, everything' and her claim that 'everything I would like in a relationship with a fella that is what they had' indicate that the relationship may have moved beyond a platonic bond.[62] Moreover, Lingstrom explores same sex relationships in her 1939 novel *Axel*, which includes the passage 'I think love between men is a much nobler kind of love than mere sex attraction'.[63] While attributing such a statement to Lingstrom's own opinions is not accurate, such a sentiment does suggest that she was accepting of the idea of same-sex desire.

In reality, we have no way of knowing the sexual orientation of artists such as Batty, Faulkner, Burroughes, or Lingstrom. However, what we do know is that they, and many other poster artists, actively deviated from an expected heterosexual lifestyle in which they would marry and bear children. I would therefore argue that their relationships and lifestyles can be considered under the title of a 'queer' identity, if we follow Michael Warner's discussion of queer identity as defining 'itself against the normal rather than against the heterosexual'[64]-Jay Stewart's discussion of queer theory as a celebration of 'transgression in the form of visible difference from norms' also supports this and makes it possible to acknowledge the fact that women rejected social expectations and went against convention through their friendships.

The queer lifestyles pursued by many female poster artists suggest that marriage did not hold the importance that it possessed for fine-art artists. It therefore joined family connections in being less important for aspiring poster artists than fine-art producers. Despite

[61] Episode one 'Inventing Children's Television: The 50s', *Children's Tv On Trial,* BBC 4, First Broadcast May 27 2007, 57 minutes.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Freda Lingstrom, *Axel*, London, 1938, 93.
[64] Jay Stewart, 'Academic Theory', *Genderqueer and Non-Binary Genders*, Christina Richards, Walter Pierre Bouman, and Meg-John Barker, (ed) London, 2017, 53 – 72, 62; Michael Warner 'Introduction', *Fear of a Queer Planet: Queer Politics and Social Theory,* Michael Warner (ed), Minneapolis, 1993, xxvi.

this, other types of homosocial relationship — whether sexual or platonic — do appear to have been an aid to gaining artistic success. This was especially true given the potential to suggest an artist for a commission — as discussed in relation to Vera and Althea Willoughby — a fact which makes it highly possible that such relationships may have resulted in the induction of women artists into the industry of poster art

Before moving on from a discussion of artistic families, it is important to note that there is also one further issue. Deepwell has argued that family connections to the art world were also necessary for a woman to achieve fame or success in subsequent art history.[65] As Deepwell notes, 'the most visible women artists in these modern movements remain those who were the ex-pupils, wives, lovers, mothers, patrons, or colleagues of male artists in avant-garde groups'.[66] Meanwhile those without such connections have largely vanished from history — if they were even there to begin with. Deepwell's ideas relate back to the issues I laid out in the introduction to this thesis, where I noted the benefits of children and grandchildren to the preservation of legacies, as seen in the case of Calkin James and the Zinkeisen sisters. The loss of records for unmarried or childless women would therefore suggest that, at least in this way, family held considerable importance to both fine and poster artists.

A Middle- Class Lifestyle

Moving beyond the importance of an artistic family, several scholars have noted that middle-class status and identity were also imperative to the aspiring artist. As noted in Chapter One, growing up in a family who enjoyed a secure economic position was advantageous to a woman's chances of gaining an artistic education, as it allowed a woman to continue her

[65] Deepwell, *Women Artists*, 5.
[66] Ibid.

schooling after the school leaving age of fourteen. It also aided her entry into art school. Although state funded art education was available, the best art schools (and those which offered the best professional opportunity) charged fees for attendance, making them less accessible.[67] For example, during the 1920s the Royal College of Art charged thirty guineas for a full year of tuition or twelve guineas for a single term, while the Slade charged annual fees of £30.[68] Such costs have led Nicola Moorby to argue that 'economic stability and social position' keenly effected a woman's chances of gaining a good art education and the professional development this allowed. [69]

Similarly, the money associated with a middle-class upbringing was often necessary for women wishing to navigate the uncertain world of artistic production, which could often result in periods of economic precarity. Having a supportive middle-class family was one means of navigating these difficulties. Many women creatives, such as the author Dorothy Sayers, received cheques from their parents which helped them to survive fallow periods or low earnings.[70] Those who didn't have access to this support often struggled. For example. Burroughes described how (before she began earning money as an artist) she and her partner, Hutchinson, lived in 'two unfurnished rooms off the Harrow-road' and ate just 'one staple meal a day, consisting of "scrag end" of mutton with vegetables' as they had 'just £2 10s a week to spend on rent, food, and light'.[71]

It is often easiest to surmise an artist's middle-class status by looking at the professions of their fathers. Doing so reveals that, as in the world of fine art, most women poster artists were also born into middle-class families. For example, Lingstrom's father

[67] Lisa Tickner, 'Men's Work? Masculinity and Modernism', Norman Bryson, Ann Holly Michael, and Keith Moxey (eds), *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations,* New England, 1994, 42-84.
[68] Nikki Frater, 'Rex Whistler (1905 – 1944): Patronage and Artistic Identity', thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth, September 2013, 36; 'Royal College of Art', *Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951*, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/organization.php?id=msib4_1222355292&search=Royal%20College%20of%20Art (accessed June 2019).
[69] Nicola Moorby, 'Her Indoors: Women Artists and Depictions of the Domestic Interior', *Tate Papers*, 2012.
[70] Francesca Wade, *Square Haunting: Five Women, Freedom and London Between the Wars*, London, 2020, n/p.
[71] Anon., 'Women Novelists Death', *Nottingham Evening Post,* 10th August 1932.

George Louis worked as secretary for the North London rank of the Friendly society, a position which allowed his family to live in a terrace house in Middlesex and employ a servant.[72] Meanwhile, Nowell Edwards' (1907 – 1983) father worked as a clergyman and employed two servants to help look after his family.[73] This middle-class upbringing aided many of these poster artists' attendance at art schools. As noted in Chapter One, both Anna and Doris Zinkeisen had a personal tutor before attending the Royal Academy for their artistic training, an education financed by their father's success as a timber merchant.[74] Those attending the Slade also had family money. Adshead's father was Stanley Davenport Adshead, a well-respected architect, Phyllis Bray's (1910 – 1989) father, William de Bray, was a British diplomat while Edna Clarke Hall's father, Benjamin Waugh, was a wealthy minister and social campaigner who helped found the NSPCC.[75]

Like their fine-art contemporaries many women poster artists also relied on their families to support their lifestyles. Where an artist resided was viewed as critically important for both fine and poster artists during the early twentieth century. Many believed that residing in artistic areas of London (such as Chelsea or Holland Park) often correlated to artistic success. Caroline Dakers has noted this, arguing that during the nineteenth century 'several [artists] became associates of the academy soon after investing in property in the [artistic] area, almost as if the address assisted in their elevation'.[76] Quirk also considers this, arguing that, during the twentieth century, artistic areas 'functioned as a signifier of cultural credibility and placed women in geographic dialogue with the primary infrastructure of art production and commerce'.[77] Meanwhile Thomas notes that where an artist 'lived mattered. It brought with it a certain amount of prestige which could reinforce social respect; attract

[72] 1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census; 1901 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[73] 1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[74] Philip Kelleway, *Highly Desirable: The Zinkeisen Sisters & Their Legacy,* Suffolk, 2008, 5
[75] Hunter, 'Obituary: Mary Adshead'; Alison Thomas, 'Hall, Edna Clarke , Lady Clarke Hall (1879–1979)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford, 2004.
[76] Caroline Dakers, *The Holland Park Circle: Artists and Victorian Society*, Yale, 1999, 4.
[77] Quirk, *Women, Art, and Money*, 65.

customers, patrons, and collaborators; and obtain invitations to social events where links with networks of fellow artists could be fostered'.[78] As an indication of the high demand for homes in artistic areas, the streets associated with artists were notably more expensive than other locations. The 1921 population census stated that Chelsea Metropolitan Burrough had the greatest concentration of male artists, at 9 per 1000 men, while the next highest was Hampstead with 6 per 1000.[79] Both of these streets were deemed 'middle class well to do' areas in a 1929 poverty survey of London and their property was priced accordingly.[80]

A large number of women poster artists resided in Chelsea and the surrounding streets. Appendix Two features a map of these locations and provides a visual indication of the proximity of many of these artists' residences. It reveals that at least fifty-two women poster artists lived in West or Northwest London between Hammersmith and Waterloo Underground stations. Of these, eight lived in Chelsea, on streets such as Carlyle Street and Manresa Road, four lived on streets in Holland Park, and five in St Johns Wood. Although it is certainly possible that some of these artists may have moved to these locations following their own success, in many cases a poster artist's presence in this site pre-dated artistic fame or notoriety. This suggests that their ability to live in these sites was facilitated by their family's money rather than their own income. For example, during the 1910s Sybil Tawse (1886 – 1971) moved from Durham to London to attend art school.[81] By 1911 (when she was just twenty-five) she was living at 9 Gloucester Road, South Kensington with her sister Gladys Tawse (who worked as a jeweller).[82] Given that their residence in this location pre-dates both Tawse sisters' most notable successes it is highly possible that this move was

[78] Thomas, *Women Art Workers*, 29.
[79] 1921 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[80] Laura Vaughan, 'Poverty Mapping after Charles Booth' *Mapping Society The Spatial Dimensions of Social Cartography*, Laura Vaughan (ed), London 2018, 93–128.
[81] 1911 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[82] Ibid.

assisted by their father, George Tawse, who ran a successful painting and decorating business employing more than fifty workers. [83]

For other poster artists marriage provided the opportunity to move into or reside in these artistic spaces. In a thesis on the artist Eileen Mayo, Margaret Cassidy notes the role a husband's career had in facilitating his wife's move to an artistic area.[84] Cassidy claims that Mayo's marriage to Dr Richard (Ralph) Gainsborough, 'gave her security in the uncertain climate of pre-World War II Britain: a house in London (in which she used one of the main rooms on the ground floor as a studio) and a garden'.[85] Cassidy goes on to relate Mayo's renewed efforts in art to this marriage and move, suggesting that the 'security' Gainsborough provided her was the catalyst for her work.[86] A number of the other women discussed in this thesis also married men employed in notable professions, perhaps aiding their own residency in artistic locations. Calkin James and Dorothy Braddell (1889 – 1981) married architects and Calkin James lived in houses built by her husband during the 1920s and 1930s. Meanwhile others such as Clarke Hall married men involved in law and politics, allowing them to live in large houses in London. [87]

It could be argued that positioning oneself in an artistic area was actually more important to the aspiring poster artist than it was to those hoping to work in fine art. This was because, as already noted in Chapter Two, the majority of poster work was generated through postal correspondence, through which applications for work were sent and commissions were agreed. Including the address of a well-known and highly regarded artistic location would therefore have been beneficial, providing the poster artist with a level artistic legitimacy even if her name was unknown. This was also true when listing addresses in trade directories or

[83] 1891 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[84] Margaret Jillian Cassidy, 'Shifting boundaries: the art of Eileen Mayo', Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Canterbury, 2000, 5.
[85] Ibid. The London electoral register reveals that this 'house in London' was 26 Blenheim Road, a two-story detached house in St Johns Wood.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Thomas, 'Hall, Edna Clarke'.

commercial art registers, where many poster commissioners sought new talent. A number of poster artists paid the fees to list their names in these registers, including Sybil Andrews, Lilian Hocknell, Chloe Preston (dates unknown), Dorothea Sharp, and Anna and Doris Zinkeisen.[88]

Residing in artistic areas also offered easier access to artists' suppliers, aiding an artist when pursuing her work. Artists living around Chelsea including Batty, Faulkner, Dawson, Tawse, Fawkes, Lilian Hocknell, Helen Bryce (1891 – 1971), and Helen Marshall (1897 – unknown) all lived within a mile of the Chelsea Art Stores, a leading art supplier which had been established by Frank Pearce in 1914 and was regularly advertised in artists' journals and exhibition catalogues.[89] An exhibition catalogue for The London Portrait Society lists the types of materials available at Chelsea, stating that the colours of all makers were supplied and that the store also offered picture framing, mount cutting, gilding and repairs.[90] Similarly, artists living in and around Kensington such as Beard, Mary Koop, Andrews, Elsie Henderson (1880 – 1967), Minnie McLeish, (1876 – 1957) Constance Irving (1879 – 1964), and Kathleen Stenning all lived within a mile of a branch of Reeves and Son Ltd, another key art supplier which had existed under a variety of names since 1762.[91]

Finally, residence in these spaces held notable benefits for part-time poster artists who wished to combine their work in poster art with other artistic ventures. The majority of the leading exhibition spaces and galleries of the period were to be found in the capital. Although exhibiting at these venues did not require a London address, presence in the city was beneficial, as it allowed the artist to visit the exhibitions, meet fellow artists, and interact with the public viewing their work. Knight discussed the value of this in her autobiography *Oil*

[88] Post Office London Directory 1925 – 1935.
[89] 'Chelsea Art Stores', *British Artists' Suppliers, 1650-1950*, https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-suppliers/c/ (accessed 2019).
[90] Anon., *The London Portrait Society: Illustrated Catalogue of their third exhibition*, New Burlington Galleries, 1930.
[91] 'Reeves and Son Ltd', *British Artists' Suppliers, 1650-1950,* https://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-suppliers/r/ (accessed 2019).

Paint and Grease Paint.[92] Here she discussed the issues of exhibiting at the RA whilst living and studying art in Nottingham, as despite having a work accepted, she was unable to view it at exhibition due to 'not having any money to spend on fares and hotel'.[93] This continued to be a problem when Knight and her husband Harold moved to Cornwall during the early 1910s as, despite having more money to finance trips, they were still forced to travel to London regularly to attend gallery openings and varnishing events.[94] As a result, Knight writes that 'we decided that London should be our headquarters', a decision which caused her and Harold to move to St Johns Wood in 1919.[95]

The above evidence suggests that family money did hold influence over a woman's ability to build a successful career as a poster artist due to the advantages it gave women in education and lifestyle. However, it is important to note that it was possible to achieve success in poster art without these middle-class benefits. For example, Sybil Andrews achieved substantial success in poster art despite not coming from a notably affluent family. Born in 1898 Andrews was the third child born to Charles Andrews and Beatrice Trigg.[96] She grew up in the Suffolk town of Bury St Edmunds, but her childhood was filled with financial difficulties, and these were exacerbated in 1910 when her father left the family and moved to Canada.[97] Andrews acknowledged the effect of this unstable economic beginning, saying 'I was one of five and no father. There was no money. I had to work for what I had'.[98] In evidence of this, at seventeen Andrews left her grammar school and entered work as a secretary for a land agent in Northampton.[99] Here she was praised for her typing and shorthand, but left a year later in 1916 when she gained an apprenticeship as a welder in an aeroplane factory; a job which became available to women following the conscription of men

[92] Knight, *Oil Paint*, 121.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Ibid.
[95] Ibid, 225.
[96] Jenny Uglow, *Sybil & Cyril: Cutting through Time*, London, 2021, 18.
[97] Ibid, 22.
[98] Ibid, 26.
[99] Ibid, 7.

into the war.[100] Andrews' job as a welder was a physical task and took place in an intense and dangerous atmosphere. Despite this, Jenny Uglow has argued that this experience influenced Andrews' later artwork as it required a similar level of dexterity and skill.[101]

Following the war, Andrews entered work as an assistant teacher at the Portland House School in Guildhall Street. Whilst working this job she undertook artistic training via a correspondence course run by the former poster artist John Hassall.[102] As a result of Hassall's reputation, this course was one of the most prestigious of its kind and was regularly promoted in trade journals as a way for aspiring artists to enter poster art.[103] Some contemporary writers actually argued that correspondence schools, such as Hassall's, were better suited to training poster artists than typical art establishments. W. G Raffé declared the benefits of correspondence courses in his discussion of training in commercial art written in 1931.[104] Raffé suggested that commercial artists needed to learn skills such as printing, advertising. accounting, and economics which were not taught in traditional art schools. This made 'correspondence schools' uniquely useful to such artists.[105]

Whether Raffé was accurate in these perceptions remains unclear, and indeed appears slightly doubtful given that the most prolific poster artists all came from notable art schools. Regardless of this, his arguments are interesting because they raise interesting questions around the expectations of the poster artist during this period and the perceived potential (even if not realisation) for those with lower incomes and limited access to conventional artistic training to gain success. Correspondence courses were typically cheaper than those at an in-person art school and could be completed around full-time work. They therefore appealed to those artists who came from lower income families. It seems likely that

[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid, 8.
[102] Ibid, 25.
[103] Advert for John Hassell course, *Commercial Art*, September 1923, n/p.
[104] W G Raffé, 'Training for Advertising and Commercial Art', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 79:4086, 1931, 397-415.
[105] Ibid.

Andrews' decision to complete this course was based largely on these financial factors. This is supported further by the fact that Andrews' subsequent artistic training at schools, including Heatherley's School of Fine Art and the Grosvenor School of Modern Art, took place part time. This meant that she was able to pay for her course fees whilst working as a secretary.[106]

Regardless of unusual beginnings, by the 1930s Andrews was regularly producing posters for London transport, creating modernist works which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Five. Another artist whose early life differed to her peers was Beard. Born in 1897 to Edwin and Bertha Beard, Beard enjoyed a middle-class lifestyle during the early years of her life, living in a terraced house in London with a live-in-maid. [107] However, in 1901 her childhood changed dramatically when her father died of meningitis septicaemia.[108] Following his death, Beard's mother (who had previously been unemployed) was forced to gain work as a live-in-cook for the Highfield family, leaving Beard and her brother in the care of Stockwell Orphanage for Fatherless Boys and Girls.[109] In addition to providing Beard with a place to live, Stockwell also offered her an education. This was based on Christian teachings and followed the values which had been instilled in the institution by its former-headmaster and founder C. H Spurgeon.[110] Most notably the orphanage focused on preparing its students for the world of work. For girls this meant making them 'proficient in the ordinary home duties of domestic service', so that they would be able to gain work in this industry when they moved away from the orphanage.[111] The school also placed a focused on 'the useful rather than the ornamental', a direct contrast to the artistic education enjoyed by many of Beard's middle-class peers.[112]

[106] Uglow, *Sybil & Cyril*, 25-26.
[107] 1901 England, Wales & Scotland Census.
[108] Ibid.
[109] LCC/EO/DIV08/STC/AD/009, London, England; School Admission and Discharge Registers.
[110] Peter Shepherd, 'Spurgeon's Children', *Baptist Quarterly,* 42:2, 2007, 89–102.
[111] Ibid, 96.
[112] Ibid.

Despite not receiving an early artistic education Beard went on to become a highly successful poster artist, gaining notoriety that was equal to her more privileged peers. In 1928, the critic John Harrison described Beard's work as 'some of the most charming advertisement designs produced in England to-day', and her posters were regularly included in books such as Walter Sparrow's *Advertising and British Art.*[113] . In addition to this, by 1928 Beard had moved to a boarding house at 23 Nevern Place placing her in the artistic Burrough of Kensington where she lived until her death in 1984.[114]

In line with the examples of Andrews and Beard, it would appear that, as in the case of artistic lineage or marriage, the economic beginnings of artists differ between full-time poster artists and part-time or celebrity artists. Those involved in full-time poster design typically came from lower-middle class families — in which their fathers worked in skilled professions such as butchery, plumbing, or the clergy — but may not have had substantial expendable income needed to support their daughter's careers.[115] In contrast, those going into fine art as well as poster design were more likely to come from wealthier-middle-class families where their fathers worked as managers or business owners and the family themselves employed servants. This division is perhaps unsurprising. The opportunities poster design offered for equal pay made it more likely that women could be independent and self-sufficient once entering this sector, making it highly appealing to those with limited access to family money.

A Room of One's Own

The final factor typically listed as necessary for women's artistic success is access to a studio. Thomas notes that, for women artists in the nineteenth century, the studio 'could shape their

[113] John Harrison, 'Freda Beard', *Commercial Art*, January 1928, 278.
[114] London, England, Electoral Registers, 1928.
[115] Examples of this include Batty, Lilian Diring or Barraclough.

professional identity, and physically validate their commitment to the arts', as well as acting as a space for teaching, for exhibiting and selling work, and for hosting friends and acquaintances.[116] Similarly, Quirk has noted the importance of the studio as a means for women to establish 'their professional credentials to the wider artistic community', as the space acted as a symbol of artistic status and elevated them from amateur to professional artist.[117]

These scholarly discussions on the importance of the studio follow those of the early twentieth century, when the studio was praised by Virginia Woolf in her essay 'A Room of One's Own'.[118] Here Woolf (whose sister was the poster artist Bell) argued that all female creatives needed to have access to their own room 'with a lock on the door' if they were to gain success.[119] Today scholars have widely discussed the significance of Woolf's 'room', with many believing it to be a metaphor for freedom rather than a physical space. For example, Julie Robin Solomon has noted that 'holding control 'over "space," over "rooms," over property in a capitalist society' results in 'control over time as well', providing women with greater autonomy than was conventionally available.[120]

Notwithstanding these subsequent interpretations, for many contemporaries of Woolf the physical space of the studio was highly important. Mayo discussed this in 1934 recounting how

> Years ago, I had no idea of succeeding as a painter but given the inspiration and the quiet of my own room, I painted my first picture. The great writers and painters of this age are unanimous in agreeing that they owe their most

[116] Zoë Thomas, 'At Home with the Women's Guild of Arts: Gender and Professional Identity in London Studios, c.1880–1925', *Women's History Review,* 24: 6, 2015, 938-964, 942.
[117] Quirk, *Women, Art, and Money*, 38.
[118] Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own/Three Guineas*, Oxford, 1992.
[119] Ibid, 137.
[120] Julie Robin Solomon, 'Staking Ground: The Politics of Space in Virginia Woolf's A Room of One's Own and Three Guineas', *Women's Studies*, 16:3, 1989, 331–47.

> inspired works to being alone. From my own experience, I know it to be true.[121]

Given Mayo's work in poster art we can assume that having a dedicated studio was also important for poster artists, creating a crossover between fine and poster art.

The studio offered practical benefits to the poster artist, providing a space in which art equipment and finished works could be stored. As noted in Chapter Two there were a number of similarities between the production of paintings and the production of poster art, with both requiring the same tools. Photographs of women poster artists reveal that many used an easel to produce their poster designs, a piece of equipment which required substantial space both when in use and when being stored. An easel can be seen in the video of Mabel Attwell, discussed in the previous chapter, and in photographs of poster artists including the Zinkiesen sisters and Daphne Barry, suggesting that it was key to a poster artist's work. Other tools and supplies used to produce poster artworks also took up substantial space. In his 1933 book on poster art, Leonard Richmond outlined the multiple tools needed by a poster artist, including two sorts of brushes (sable and hogs hair) in various shapes and sizes, a variety of paints including basic 'poster colours' but also watercolour, tempura and oil paint, a base for the work such as a canvas or beaver board, and drawing materials including tracing paper.[122] All of these tools took up space as they needed to be stored correctly in order to extend their shelf life, making a studio in which to keep them highly desirable.

A painting by Audrey Weber provides an insight into the difficulties faced by those artists who did not have access to a studio space (Untitled c 1930 Private collection) (fig. 34). Although painted around 1930 and thus produced before Weber joined the world of poster art in 1935, this painting evokes the experiences of women poster artists working in these

[121] Eileen Mayo, 'The Art of Living', *Birmingham Daily Mail,* 12th February 1931.
[122] Leonard Richmond, *The Technique of the Poster*, London 1933, 1-4.

conditions. Painted in a portrait layout which compresses the image into an awkward frame, Weber's painting shows a feminine figure (presumably the artist herself) working on a painting in the centre of a small dark room. The figure appears in front of a neatly made bed, which symbolises the prescribed function of the space depicted and emphasises its unsuitability as a studio.

In further evidence of the room's inaptness as a space for artistic production, Weber depicts the figure in her painting in an awkward position. Its left arm is stretched out as it holds a paintbrush to the easel, while its right arm is bent at an angle in order to support what appears to be a box — perhaps a paint palette — and three more brushes. This stance emphasises the room's lack of space, which leads the feminine figure to juggle art materials in its arms while it works, rather than putting them down on a table. Other elements of Weber's painting also indicate the problems that arise from not working in a designated studio. Weber's use of a dark colour palette evokes the lack of natural light in the room and corresponds to the depiction of a single window as the only light source. The light which is coming through this window appears minimal and falls largely on the bed behind the figure rather than on its easel, clearly unconducive to producing a work of art.

By depicting the difficulties associated with working without a studio, Weber's painting helps to demonstrate the value a studio held for poster artists and indicates the significance they themselves placed on this space. In line with this, many poster artists spent considerable money on acquiring a studio. According to the American artist Anna Lea Merritt, in 1901 artists needed £200 a year for studio rent, materials and models.[123] Meanwhile, welfare campaigner Emily Hobhouse claimed that renting a studio in 1900 cost women artists around a third of their annual income.[124] While the higher earnings of a poster artist (as established in Chapters One and Two) may have made this percentage slightly lower

[123] Anna Lea Meritt mentions these costs in her memoir *Love Locked Out* as recorded by Quirk, *Women, Art, and Money,* 65.
[124] Emily Hobhouse, 'Women Workers: How They Live, How They Wish to Live', *Nineteenth Century,* 1900, 473.

for the women discussed in this thesis, this remained a considerable cost. The high number of poster artists who were willing to absorb this outlay therefore demonstrates the considerable importance placed on the studio space.

There were a number of ways in which poster artists could deal with the high costs of the studio. Some used family funds to support their access, relating back to the value of middle-class status discussed in the above section. Cathleen Mann's ability to have a studio at Chelsea Manor Studios in Flood Street, was most likely aided by her high social status as a Marchioness, through her marriage to Francis Douglas, 11th Marquess of Queensberry.[125] This studio gave Mann a creative space away from the family home at 5 Cheyne Walk and freed her from the responsibilities of child rearing.[126] In an interview from 2003, Mann's son David described the effect of this. He explained that his mother has 'always had' this studio and would 'go to work' here, leaving her children at home with a nanny before sending them away to boarding school at the age of eight.[127]

Other artists overcame the impeding cost of a private studio by sharing the space with a fellow poster artist. As already noted, Batty and Fawkes shared a studio space at Albert Studios during the 1920s and 1930s, occupying the first of eight studio terraces built in the Arts and Crafts style by John Halley.[128] The posters produced by Fawkes and Batty share a number of similarities, suggesting that their close working conditions may have impacted on their artistic styles. Both artists utilised negative space in their posters, using the blank paper of the poster to demarcate elements of an image. This can be seen in the use of blank space to delineate the leaves and banner on Fawkes' 1935 London Transport poster *The Silver Jubilee* (fig.35) and in its use to depict the body of the feminine figure in Batty's 1932 *The Underground Brings all Things Nearer* (fig.36). The use of negative space as a technique was

[125] C.H Sykes, 'Mann, Cathleen Sabine (1896–1959)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.
[126] Interview with David Queensbury, *National Life Stories Collection: Crafts' Lives*, Part 1, 2003.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Battersea Park Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy, Wandsworth Council, 2014.

fairly uncommon in poster art, which normally relied on bright colours and bold lines to get its message across. This makes Batty and Fawkes' adoption of this same style particularly interesting and suggests a level of collaboration between the two women.

Some poster artists built studios in their homes. Anna and Doris Zinkiesen shared a studio in their parents' home at 8 St Andrews Place until the mid 1930s.[129] The sisters' studio occupied the house's former drawing room, and was positioned on the ground floor, overlooking Regents Park. In a 1926 article for the magazine *Eve,* a journalist praised this room.[130] The journalist noted that the studio was well equipped and offered the artists the opportunity and space to work in the variety of genres they desired. They described how 'Doris keeps miniature theatres …on which she tries out her stage designs' and 'Anna has a solid table covered with pieces of slate, wax, and tiny tools', while 'both have easels.[131] These descriptions were in keeping with both artists' continued work in both the fine and commercial arts throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

As in the example of Fawkes and Batty, sharing a studio also encouraged a partnership to develop between the sisters. Doris Zinkeisen noted this in an account written after Anna Zinkeisen's death, where she recalled that their time sharing a studio was one of collaboration. Doris Zinkeisen notes that 'in our youth we always worked together, shared a studio and over problems, worked on one another's paintings'.[132] Many of the posters produced by the Zinkiesen sisters suggest the collaboration Doris Zinkeisen notes. This is most notable in those produced for the LNER railway during the early 1930s, advertising places on the company's line. For example, the posters *London* by Anna Zinkeisen (fig.37) and *Scarborough* by Doris Zinkeisen (fig.38) reveal elements of each sister's influence. The general appearance of the figures in these images — tall and lean with small heads and long

[129] England & Wales, Civil Registration Marriage Index 1916 – 2005; Doris Zinkeisen, 'My sister', *Anna: A Memorial Tribute to Anna Zinkeisen,* Josephine Walpole (ed), London, 1978, 35.
[130] Anon., 'Art as Trade', *Eve,* 30th June 1926, 734.
[131] Ibid.
[132] Zinkeisen, 'My sister', 35.

limbs — was a style seen across both artists' works, suggesting that their shared studio influenced them both. Meanwhile both posters appear in the form of a tableau in which a group of figures act out a scene, in a manner which resembles actors on a stage. This was probably developed from Doris Zinkeisen's knowledge of and work on stage scenery. Similarly, the detail on the figures' costumes and their facial expressions were perhaps developed from Anna Zinkeisen's experience as a portrait painter.

Five minutes down the road from the Zinkeisen's home, Adshead also lived with her parents at 1 Chester Gate, where she resided until her marriage to the artist Stephen Bone in 1929. Like the Zinkiesen sisters Adshead benefited from a studio space in this property, this time on the top floor. A painting by Adshead seems to show this studio. Although the painting's lack of date and its ambiguous title, simply named *Studio Interior* (fig.39), make it impossible to confirm the location of this scene, a number of features suggest Chester Gate to be the site. The left corner of the painting features a sloped ceiling which is in keeping with the mansard roof on the top floors of the Chester Gate building. Meanwhile, the overly large skirting boards and wooden floors that Adshead depicts in the painting resemble those seen in a photograph of the room (fig.40).

Regardless of its location, *Studio Interior* demonstrates Adshead's pride in her studio space which she deemed a worthy subject for her work. Adshead depicts a number of items associated with artistic production, including an easel which is primed with a fresh canvas and a number of completed artworks which line the floor and lean against walls. Meanwhile a large window can be seen on the left side of the canvas, a notable contrast to the small window in Weber's work. Another less obvious artistic feature included in Adshead's painting is the stove depicted near the centre of the room. Artists' memories of the studio frequently referenced the stove. Dawson, recalls how her parents 'camped out' in their studio,

'having their kippers cooked on the studio stove'.[133] The stove also features in Arthur Ransome's account of an artist's studio, as he describes how during a modelling session 'the kettle will be boiling briskly on the stove', allowing the model and artist to 'make a little brew of coffee, and take a quarter of an hour of leisure, with cigarettes and coffee-cups'.[134]

Adshead and the Zinkeisen's co-option of a room in their parents' home demonstrates the substantial family support they received for their art. Quirk notes this, highlighting that 'for a drawing-room studio to succeed, the artist's family and spouse had to not only support and endorse her artistic ambitions but also to respect the mental and physical parameters of her workspace'.[135] This perhaps suggests that family support of an artist's work and process was more important than a studio itself. Such ideas relate back to an understanding of the room in Woolf's essay as a metaphorical space, which allowed women the privacy and opportunity to pursue their creative work.

Family support was also necessary when an artist established a studio within her marital home. Calkin James had a studio in every home she inhabited between 1922 and 1939 and often relied on her architect husband C H James to create these spaces. One of these studios at 39 Southgrove, Highgate, was depicted in a photograph taken by Dell and Wainwright and included in an article written for the *Architects Journal* (fig.41).[136] The room measured 17.3 feet by 13.6 feet and had a large window on the outside wall, providing Calkin James with a light source for her work. It contained a number of built-in pieces of furniture such as a corner cupboard, a circular cabinet, and a seat made from 'two bottom halves of ordinary plan chests, with a mattress on top'.[137] These features were used to modernise the room, which maintained the original fittings from when it was built in the nineteenth century. The furniture's plain exterior follows the focus on simplicity promoted by the Bauhaus

[133] Bickerdike 'The Dawson's', 322
[134] Arthur Ransome, *Bohemia in London*, London, 1907, 68.
[135] Quirk, *Women Art and Money*, 44.
[136] Anon., 'Two Houses in South Grove, Highgate', *The Architects' Journal*, 80:5, 1934, 10.
[137] Ibid.

movement. Such modernist designs were also notable in Calkin James' poster art, suggesting a connection between her studio space and her work.

In many cases Calkin James' access to a studio space prevented her husband from having a study, as there was not enough room for a second private workspace in their home. This eschewing of expected gender ideas suggests that the entire family placed importance on Calkin James' work, presumably in recognition of the money she made through her art and the need to continue this income. Betty Miles alludes to this in an article written on the couple in which she notes that 'Mrs James' income was all the more necessary at a time when architects could find very little employment' a claim which suggests C H James was not the family's main bread winner. [138] Allowing Calkin James a studio may therefore have been C H James' means of ensuring that the family remained financially stable despite the economic issues Britain was facing during the interwar period.

Miles suggests that the employment of servants by the James' was also important for the family's prosperity, freeing Calkin James from the domestic responsibilities usually given to women and allowing her more time to work.[139] Plans of the Southgate property reveal the considerable provisions for servants in the lower ground floors, including a 'maid's bed sitting room' in the space below Calkin James' studio.[140] This suggests a level of in-house employment which was unusual for middle-class families at this time, when the employment of servants was dropping due to both lower earnings and the movement of working-class women into other roles such as factory work.[141]

In line with this, all of Calkin James' studios were notably separate from the family's living quarters, releasing Calkin James from many of the expectations of women as care givers. Located away from the central family rooms, either in the attic of the property or in a

[138] Betty Miles, 'Tradition and Modernity? Margaret Calkin James 1895-1985 and CH James 1893-1953', *The Journal of the Decorative Arts Society 1850 - the Present*, 20, 1996, 62–78, 71.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid, 72.
[141] Selina Todd, 'Young Women, Work, and Leisure in Interwar England', *The Historical Journal,* 48:3, 2005, 789-809, 792.

back room overlooking the garden, all of these studios offered Calkin James a sense of privacy away from the concerns of family life. For example, at the Southgrove property, Calkin James' studio was positioned at the front of the house next to the dining room and running parallel to the much larger living room.[142] Such a position meant that Calkin James was detached from the children's day nursery which was positioned at the back of the first floor directly over the dining room, making it less likely that Calkin James would be disturbed when she worked. Calkin James' daughter Elizabeth Argent provides a memory of this, recalling that much of the children's time was spent with a nanny in the nursery.[143] It was only at the end of the day that the children were allowed to view their mother's work but only 'if the studio door was open'.[144] This reference to the studio door demonstrates Calkin James' control over her studio space, opening and closing the entrance to the room as she desired and relating back to the need for privacy discussed in Woolf's text.

Beyond the large separate studios discussed above, a number of poster artists rented smaller studios and lived and worked in these spaces. Arnrid Johnston chose this option, living in studio 12 in the famous Trafalgar Studios.[145] This building was the first example of purpose-built studio housing in London and was intended to make studio space more accessible to those on a lower income.[146] It could be found on Manresa Road, a street in the centre of Chelsea and was a three-story building of fifteen separate rooms. The studio was residence to a number of notable artists during Johnston's time there, giving her access to a wider professional network.[147]

[142] Miles, 'Tradition and Modernity?', 71.
[143] Fiona Camplin interview with Elizabeth Argent https://soundcloud.com/fiona-clampin/margaret-calkin-james
[144] Ibid.
[145] Patricia E C Croot, 'Settlement and building: Artists and Chelsea', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 12, Chelsea*, Patricia E C Croot (ed), 2004.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid.

Coleman Smith also lived and worked in her studio. This space was described by Ransome in his 1907 memoire, *Bohemia in London*. Here Ransome discussed the room in detail, describing how it

> had been made of two smaller chambers by the removal of the partition wall… The walls were dark green, and covered with brilliant-coloured drawings, etchings, and pastel sketches. A large round table stood near the window, spread with bottles of painting inks with differently tinted stoppers, China toys, paperweights of odd designs, ashtrays, cigarette boxes, and books … The mantel-shelves, three stories high, were laden with gimcracks. A low bookcase, crammed and piled with books, … An old grand piano… ran back into the inner room, where in the darkness was a tall mirror, a heap of crimson silks, and a low table with another candle flickering among the bottles and glasses on a tray. Chairs and stools were crowded everywhere.[148]

Although somewhat romanticised, Ransome's detailed description of Coleman Smith's home — which spans two pages of his book in its entirety — highlights an issue with the live-in studio, as an artist was forced to fit all of her belongings into a small space. Such a set up was therefore only really an option for those with limited possessions, meaning that most of the women poster artists opting for this arrangement were unmarried, single, and/or young.

Despite the importance placed on the artistic studio, in some ways access to this space was less important for a poster artist than it was for a fine-art artist. A number of the key purposes of the studio were not necessarily applicable to poster artists, perhaps leading to the belief that the poster could be produced in the home (a fact discussed in detail in Chapter

[148] Ransome, *Bohemia,* 52 – 53.

Two). For example, for many fine-art artists the studio was a space for selling art, providing an arena in which prospective buyers could visit, select paintings, or discuss commissions.[149] In such cases the studio space needed to appear professional and to promote the artist's skills to a potential client, in order to ensure that the transaction was a success. In contrast, studio visits to buy art were not part of a poster artist's job. As already noted, commissions for poster art were agreed via letter or else at the offices of the company commissioning the work, removing the need for people to visit the artist's studio. It was, therefore, less important for a poster artist to have a professional looking studio, making an address in an artistic area sufficient, regardless of the standard of property inhabited.

In addition to this the studio held less importance for the woman poster artist's reputation as a 'professional' artist.[150] The very act of producing a poster and selling it to a commissioner made a poster artist a 'professional' and removed debates around the status of their career. This contrasted significantly with the fine-art world where women were forced to fight for professional status for many years, despite selling their work or meeting typical barometers of artistic success. Quirk considers this and relates the fight for professionalism to the studio space. She claims that 'for women, dogged by the stereotype of 'Sunday painter' amateurism, studio access was even more important in establishing their professional credentials to the wider artistic community'.[151] For this reason it would seem that, although the studio was important for the practical benefits it offered the woman poster artist, it was most likely not valued for its social status in the way it was by fine-art artists.

Before finishing this section, it is important to note that there was also a final type of studio occupied by women poster artists during this time. Those working in agencies such as the fictional Miss A (proposed and discussed in Chapter One) shared a studio space at the

[149] Thomas, 'Women's Guild of Arts', 955.
[150] Discussion of the studio and professional status can be found in Thomas, 'Women's Guild of Arts', 955.
[151] Quirk, *Women, Art, and Money*, 38.

company premises where they worked. Such a space is described by Respondent 39 in her account for the Mass Observation project.[152] She describes how

> The workshop is crammed to distraction: two drawing tables, a workbench scattered with paint and glue, a treadle-fretsaw saw (my great joy), three stools, shelves full of architectural models and roles of plans overflowing onto the tables and about the place, together with old and current drawings, paint pots, old pieces of plywood, batteries, tools, sawdust, picture frames, newspaper, and a bunch of flowers in a jam jar.[153]

Respondent 39's description of this space as 'crammed to distraction' suggests that this studio did not offer the private space for artistic contemplation and production described in Woolf's text or in many of the above examples.[154] Despite this, the agency studios held a number of benefits to the women poster artist, again confirming the importance of the studio space.

For example, the existence of the agency studio offered an artist space to work and produce her art outside the family home. This separate space was particularly important to agency artists who often made less money than their freelance equivalents and were thus less likely to have room in their home that could be dedicated to artistic work. In line with this the agency studio also offered other practical benefits such as heating, lighting, and the equipment needed for work (paint pots, old pieces of plywood, batteries, tools, sawdust, picture frames). These amenities were most likely financed by an employer and were

[152] Survey Respondent 039, August 1937, Mass Observation Archive. University of Sussex Special Collection
[153] Ibid.
[154] Ibid.

therefore beneficial to those on lower wages who may struggle to fund their own artistic practice.

The act of traveling to, entering, and existing within, these agency spaces was also significant. Traveling to the agency established an artist's professional identity despite her not having a studio of her own. It therefore worked to validate an agency worker's career in the same way that living in an artistic location benefited a freelance poster. In addition to this the studio space offered the opportunity for artists to collaborate and work together in much the same way as Batty and Fawkes or the Zinkeisen sisters. This co-working, coupled with the proximity of multiple agency workers 'crammed' into the studio space, made it possible to develop networks amongst agency workers similar to those established in exhibitions.

A Career Requiring no Special Advantages

For much of the early twentieth century the production of poster art bore considerable similarities to the production of fine art, requiring an artist to display considerable talent and creative skill. The industry itself was also structured around similar tropes, employing artists who had attended art school and who had the security to enter into the notoriously fickle industry of art. Despite this, the field of poster art was more accessible than the fine-art world in many ways and this lead artists such as Peto to argue that 'no special advantages' were needed to enter this industry.[155] In this chapter I have investigated Peto's claims and have confirmed that there were fewer barriers in the world of poster art than fine art. This accessibility is evident in the range of women artists working in this industry, who all came from a variety of backgrounds.

As noted throughout this chapter there were three notable differences between the requirements for a career in fine art and a career in poster art. Firstly, the need for a woman to

[155] Wade, 'Poster-Art Work', 197.

come from an artistic family was less apparent in poster art, with many entering this work through other types of connection or networks. Similarly, the examples of artists such as Andrews and Beard suggest that middle-class status was also less important as a determiner of success. Finally, it would seem that the studio held fewer benefits for poster artists than fine-art artists, holding greater importance as a practical site for artistic creation than as a symbol of artistic status.

There are a number of reasons why the world of poster art was more accessible than that of fine art. One of the most notable explanations is the relative infancy of the poster industry during the early twentieth century. This infancy reduced the power of established poster artists or artistic families (who held influence over the world of fine art) and made it possible for other women to enter the industry. Infancy also allowed women to find their own routes into poster art, entering the profession from school or pursuing this career alongside work in fine art. As will be seen in Chapter Five this resulted in a variety of artistic approaches being used in poster design, with works by women artists ranging from stylised abstract designs to more painterly landscape works.

The greater accessibility of the poster industry can also be attributed to the higher fees paid to women artists and the economic benefits offered by this work. The fact that the earnings of women poster artists have been relevant to all three of the topics discussed in this thesis so far demonstrate the importance of the high payments these women received and suggest that women's artistic creativity and success has regularly been held back by lower wages. The substantial earnings of women poster artists were important for a variety of reasons. They made poster art a more feasible career for artists who needed to support themselves, such as those without family money or those in queer relationships. They also led to their art being taken more seriously — as seen in the example of Calkin James whose higher earnings than her husband led to her being freed from conventional responsibilities. In

addition to this, higher earnings gave poster artists a professional reputation — something often denied to women artists. This professional status made other signifiers of an artistic career (such as the studio) less important and allowed a wider range of women to enter and find success in this work.

In considering the factors that effected access to a career in poster art this chapter has also shed light on the unconventional lifestyles of many women poster artists who disavowed expected feminine behaviours in favour of more independent lives. It is undeniable that the high payments and opportunities offered by the poster would have facilitated these existences, allowing these women a level of freedom many of their peers were denied. In the following chapter, I will consider the significance of this unconventionality in detail and examine whether this was also conveyed in their poster art.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE IDEAL WOMAN

In 1928 the artist Kate Burrell (dates unknown) produced a poster for London Transport (fig. 42). Printed in a Double Royal format (1016 x 635mm) the poster advertised cheap return fares to South Harrow and was intended to encourage Londoners to visit spaces outside the city centre. However, despite advertising journey times and routes to a specific location, the poster did not feature this topographic site. Instead, Burrell focused her design around a fashionably dressed feminine figure, who towers over a background of trees, hills, and houses. The figure is dressed in a tunic which is made up of block colours of pink, blue, yellow, and orange. Its face is turned to the side and shown in profile, revealing its sharp feminine facial features, which appear to be outlined in blue eyeshadow and pink lipstick. This blue matches the blue and orange ribbon which appears around the figure's neck and the blue and orange sun hat that sits on its head.

In many ways Burrell's image seems to be at odds with the poster's purpose as an advertisement for travel to a specific location. The artwork contains no notable connection to either the site of South Harrow or to Underground travel and only the poster's title provides any indication of its focus. Despite this, Burrell's depiction of her feminine figure was in keeping with many of the other posters produced during this period. Looking across the poster art from this era, it becomes clear that both male and female artists frequently focused their poster designs on the depiction of a feminine figure like the one seen in Burrell's work. This figure can be identified in all of the main poster campaigns discussed in this thesis and in a number of the posters already examined, including Dora Batty's *From Country to Town* appeal (figs. 5 – 7), Eileen Seyd's *For Your Shopping* (fig.20), and F C Harrison's *Empire Christmas Pudding* (fig.2).

The recurring feminine figure seen in poster art typically followed a number of key archetypes. The figure itself was almost always depicted as white and often had neatly quaffed, brown or dark brown hair which helped to emphasise the paleness of its skin. Its beauty was evoked through the depiction of delicate facial features and a slender body shape, while its clothing was modern but conservative in appearance and covered the figure's secondary sexual characteristic (breasts, waist, thighs). The figure was shown participating in a variety of activities, which were becoming increasingly acceptable for women during this time, including walking children in nature, shopping, and site-seeing. In all of these activities it was made to appear unimposing, often looking away from the viewer with a soft or dream-like gaze.[1] Taken together these archetypes resulted in a stereotypic image of womanhood which (as will be discussed below) corresponded closely to the middle-class view of ideal femininity.

In recognition of the figure's adherence to twentieth-century middle-class values I will refer to this recurring feminine figure as the 'ideal woman' for the remainder of this chapter. This term follows that used in discussions from the 1910s and 1920s, in which the British public attempted to reconcile traditional values of femininity with the changes taking place in the modern world. For example, in 1924 the middle-class paper *The Daily Mirror,* ran a competition encouraging its readers to vote on the 'seven essential qualities' of the modern woman.[2] The chosen qualities — love of home, love of children, common sense, charm, patience, tenderness, sincerity — and accepted vices — 'love of dress' and 'love of pleasure' were voted on by thousands of entrants and thus indicate the prevailing desires of the time.[3] As the qualities 'love of home' and 'of children' suggest there was a notable desire for women to fulfil the role of housewife and homemaker during this period, caring for

[1] The depiction of feminine figures with a dreamy gaze is discussed in more detail in Erving Goffman, *Gender Advertisements*, New York 1979, 14.
[2] Anon., 'Ideal Woman A Home Lover: Awards in our £500 competition', *Daily Mirror*, 18th November 1924, 2.
[3] Ibid.

children and — as the number of domestic servants fell — for the home.[4] However, these were counterbalanced by the vices of 'love of dress' and 'pleasure' which indicate a growing acceptance of women as consumers of luxuries and as pleasure seekers, corresponding to the figures seen in poster art. Similar ideas were put forward in an earlier competition run by the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1922, where entrants were asked to describe their ideal woman through poetry.[5] Many lines from chosen poems included descriptions of the ideal woman's appearance 'fair of form and face and nature', 'five feet six of simple grace/brown waves above a smiling face' and descriptions of her temperament, 'cheery she must be and kind', all of which correspond to the figure seen in poster art.[6]

While seeming to correspond with middle-class views of the time, the use of the ideal woman figure in poster design becomes remarkable when compared with the lives of those producing this imagery. In taking up a career as a poster artist the women producing these works were transcending conventional expectations of femininity (love of home, love of children) and developing their own professional identities and economic power. Meanwhile, others were actively challenging heteronormative patriarchy through their lifestyles, participating in the suffragette movement, working and living alone, and pursuing queer lifestyles. Such activities were a stark contrast to the femininity embodied in the ideal woman.

So why were so many women poster artists producing posters which centred the figure of the ideal woman? In this chapter I will address this apparent contrast between the lives and ideology of the women working in poster design and the type of femininity that they depicted in their poster art. I will attempt to understand why so many women poster artists routinely returned to this same figure of the ideal woman when producing their posters,

[4] Ibid.
[5] Anon., 'Ideal Woman Competition', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12th June 1922, 11.
[6] ibid

considering the connotations of consumption this figure carried and the aspirational nature of this imagery. I will also consider what happened when a poster artist subverted this dominant ideology and produced other images of femininity. Before finally assessing the potential to use poster art and the ideal woman to promote resistant ideologies in a surreptitious manner.

SYMBOLS OF CONSUMPTION

Perhaps the most notable reason for the continued depiction of the ideal woman in poster art was the poster's purpose as an artistic selling device. As noted throughout this thesis, aesthetic imagery came to be prioritised within poster production during the early twentieth century because an artistic appearance was seen as an integral factor in a poster's success. W S Rogers noted this in 1914, arguing that the most successful posters were those that conformed 'to rules of pictorial composition' and were 'well drawn and well reproduced' with 'limited explanatory lettering' and a 'striking colour scheme'.[7] Similar ideas were put forward by the British journalist W.R Titterton who claimed that 'if a poster is effective, its artistic', while W.G. Raffé suggested that artistic design was 'fundamental to all posters'.[8]

The conflation of artistry with effectiveness led poster artists to prioritise imagery over statements such as 'for sale' in their poster designs.[9] However, this prioritisation of imagery made the production of poster art a complex matter. The limited use of words meant that artists were reliant on semiotics to convey their message and had to use imagery that carried established connotations of consumption in order to ensure a viewer understood their work. For posters focused on consumption and selling this often led to a foregrounding of the

[7] W S Rogers, 'The modern poster its essentials and significance', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 62:3192, January 23, 1914, 186-195.
[8] W G Raffé, 'The Elements of the Poster', *Commercial Art,* January 1928, 219-222; W R Titterton, "Taste as a Commercial Asset', *Commercial Art*, October 1922, 3.
[9] Discussions of the similarities between poster art and gallery paintings are noted in John Hewitt, 'Posters of Distinction: Art, Advertising and the London, Midland, and Scottish Railways', *Design Issues*, 16.1, 2000, 16-35, 21.

feminine figure and femininity, ultimately leading to the frequent depiction of the ideal woman in posters like Burrell's.

The connections between femininity and consumption stemmed from a variety sources. At a basic level they came from an understanding of women as the main consumer of products, responsible for many of the sales conducted in Britain (an idea discussed in detail in Chapter Two). This connection meant that women were inextricably tied to the idea and act of 'shopping', so that the mere image of a feminine figure could conjure up the idea of consumption.[10] Associations also stemmed from an understanding of women as objects of (male) possession, which could be sampled, used, and selected in the same manner as a purchased commodity. This synthesisation of woman and object meant that the feminine figure could be used as a substitute for a product or experience and her features used to convey the product's value. Finally, the feminine figure's status as an image of consumption was also related to the connections between the feminine figure and the sex worker, an individual whose availability was conveyed by her appearance and thus functioned both as 'commodity and seller' of her goods.[11]

A number of posters demonstrate the use of the ideal woman as a selling device. One notable example is Freda Beard's poster, *Tor Shoes* (fig. 43), which was intended to advertise a range of high-quality shoes produced by the manufacture and retailer C&J Clark. Although a final print of this poster no longer exists, Beard's artwork for *Tor Shoes* has been preserved and reveals the advert's design and its relevance to this discussion. As in Burrell's poster, Beard's artwork focuses on a single feminine figure who presents many of the assets associated with the ideal woman. The figure appears at the centre of the image and is depicted in front of an over-sized green court shoe surrounded by a yellow, pink, and blue

[10] The connections between women and shopping are discussed in detail and clearly established in Erika Diane Rappaport, *Shopping for pleasure : women in the making of London's West End,* Princeton, 2000.
[11] Susan Buck-Morss, 'The Flâneur, the Sandwichman and the Whore: The Politics of Loitering', *New German Critique,* 39, 1986, 99-140, 121.

decorative spiral which frames the central scene. The figure's beauty is emphasised through the depiction of delicate facial features framed by a dark, shingle bob, a fashionable hairstyle from this period which draws attention to the figure's defined bone structure and emphasises its pale skin.

By depicting the feminine figure next to the advertised court shoe, Beard was able to evoke the necessary connotations of consumption needed to designate the shoe as 'for sale'. The figure's pose also conveys these ideas. Beard depicts her feminine figure lifting its skirt slightly with its left hand in a seductive manner intended to reveal the top of its thigh. This provocative pose is matched by the figure's facial expression, which looks directly at the viewer in a flirtatious manner. While certainly less overt than the images of female sexuality in posters made in continental Europe, such as those by the artist Alphonse Mucha (who focused on his figures' 'sensuous lips, drooping eyelids and a profusion of hair') this pose carries connotations of availability and thus engenders the necessary ideas of consumption.[12] When coupled with the figure's desirable appearance these assets assert the appeal of the product to a viewer and work to make consumption more likely.

Beard also used the ideal woman to assign further attributes to the product. The figure in the poster is dressed entirely in the same colour palette, with her dress, shoes, fan, and accessories all appearing in the same pink and red tones. This unified colour scheme, and its contrast to the green shoe, helps to convey the poster's message — that Tor shoes can be dyed to 'match any frock' — and uses the feminine figure to offer an example of this. The unified colour scheme also signifies the figure as a wealthy and fashionable woman who can afford to colour coordinate her outfit in the manner that was popular at this time. Colour matching was extremely fashionable during the 1920s and was promoted in fashion magazines in cities such as Paris and New York.[13] It was also prohibitively expensive and

[12] Jan Thompson, 'The Role of Woman in the Iconography of Art Nouveau', *Art Journal*, 31:2, 1971, 158–167, 160.
[13] Regina Lee Blaszczyk, *The Color Revolution*, Massachusetts, 2012, 172.

reserved for those who could afford to purchase accessories every time they bought a new dress. The fact that Beard's figure is wearing a colour coordinated outfit is therefore indicative of its money and class, values which are then transferred to the product advertised. This was important because Tor shoes were Clarks' most expensive range and therefore needed their quality to be emphasised in their poster advertising.

While Beard's figure may be understood as an attempt to indicate the availability and values of the commodity it appeared next to, in other cases the figure of the ideal woman was used as a substitute for a commodity. This could be because the product itself was not aesthetically pleasing, or because the commodity was an experience or activity which could not be given physical form. For example, in *There is Still the Country,* (fig. 44) Dora Batty depicts her figure of the ideal woman in the countryside, in an attempt to encourage London residents to visit the spaces bordering the capital. By presenting her figure participating in the advertised activity, Batty utilised the feminine figure's association with consumption to suggest that such a trip was readily available to a viewer and could be acquired through a single purchase.

Like Beard, Batty also emphasised her figure's appearance of availability to further establish it as a signifier of consumption. However, while Beard did this through a sexually appealing pose, Batty did so by relating her figure to fashion sketches of the period, which were themselves intended to instigate sales. There are a number of connections between Batty's figure and such sketches, suggesting that she acquired inspiration from these when producing her poster design. Most notable is the fact that Batty's figure is posed in a manner intended to showcase its clothing. For example, Batty depicts the figure's right knee bent in an awkward position which seems at odds with its location but does serve to reveal the bottom of its dress. Meanwhile the figure's torso is squared towards the viewer and its arms are thrust to the side. Such a pose emphasises the figure's slender shape and shows the dress'

details on the shoulders, neck, and sleeve cuffs in the same manner used in fashion illustrations like figure 45.

Batty's depiction of fashionable clothing on her figure also acts as a symbol of the figure's modernity. The figure's high-necked dress, which seems better suited to a city trip than a walk in the countryside, resembles the tunic shaped outfits which were popular during the 1920s when this poster was produced. Meanwhile the dress' buttons and striped details resemble the art-deco style which dominated the era. The figure's hair is also depicted in a fashionable style, appearing in a short, curled bob. Such features assert the modernity of both Batty's figure and the advertised product, giving meaning to the advert.

An Aspirational Image

The second reason why the figure of the ideal woman appeared so frequently in poster art related specifically to the female consumer, whose importance to advertising has already been established in this thesis. Traditionally the image of a feminine figure in advertising has been seen as inconsistent with the desired female consumer, due to the frequent construction of this figure through the male gaze. E J Marshall, noted this in a 1923 issue of *Commercial Art.* [14] Here Marshall lamented that 'every blessed chocolate box has a girl on it; every popular magazine shows a glad-eyed flapper on the cover… there are girls everywhere' even when their presence was not in keeping with the advertised product.[15] Marshall believed that this focus left female viewers 'neglected in the art of advertising' as they 'do not care greatly for girls' in their advertisements to the same extent as male viewers.[16]

Similar ideas have also been discussed in secondary scholarship with writers such as Marty Roth arguing that advertising from the nineteenth and twentieth century focused on an

[14] E J Marshall, 'Woman as Advertised at', *Commercial Art*, February 15 1923, 90.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Ibid.

appeal to male heterosexual desires.[17] Roth claims that this is seen most notably in what he identifies as the 'come hither' pose, in which a feminine figure appears to gesture towards an (implied male) viewer and offers him both the product and herself.[18] Karen Carter also focuses on the repetitive appearance of the sexualised feminine figure in French advertising posters and claims that 'rather than portray the pleasures of the consuming female, erotic posters represented female figures in advertising as a conduit for male desire'.[19] Although Carter does make some attempt to acknowledge that women were also viewers of these posters (a figure which Roth all but dismisses in his claim that the posters 'take their place in a circuit of male desire') her claims again deny female agency and insist upon the posters simply as erotic images for the male gaze.[20]

However, the ideas of those such as Roth and Carter are challenged by a second line of scholarship, in which scholars attempt to come to terms with the presentation of desirable feminine figures in the context of growing women's liberation. Such scholars view depictions of women in poster art as at once images of idealised female beauty and signs of female opportunity; because they offered the feminine figure a new public status and actively addressed the women walking past hoardings. Perhaps the most notable scholar to pursue this interpretation is Ruth Iskin, who argues that poster artists intended to appeal to both male and female viewers in their presentation of the feminine figure.[21] The idea of feminine appeal is also discussed by Paul Jobling and David Crowley in their chapter on the fin-de-siècle poster.[22] Here the authors complicate the belief that posters were aimed at men by arguing that they depicted female pleasure and therefore appealed to a female viewer. Jobling and Crowley argue that the fact that this pleasure bordered on the orgasmic (represented through

[17] Marty Roth, 'Advertising/Pornography/Art: The French Drink Poster', *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 48.5, 2015, 921–47.
[18] Ibid, 943.
[19] Karen L. Carter, 'Unfit for Public Display: Female Sexuality and the Censorship of Fin-de-siècle Publicity Posters', *Early Popular Visual Culture*, 8:2, 2010, 107–24, 120.
[20] Ibid; Roth, 935.
[21] Ruth Iskin, 'The Pan-European Flâneuse in Fin-de-siècle Posters: Advertising Modern Women in the City', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts,* 25:4, 2003, 333–56.
[22] Paul Jobling and David Crowley, *Graphic Design: Reproduction and Representation Since 1800*, Manchester, 1996, 107-136.

the figures' partially opened mouths) was particularly significant, as it presented a type of woman who contradicted social expectations of the time. The posters were therefore addressing the modern woman, who would be attracted by these innovative and at times shocking displays of female power.

It is my opinion that this second strand of scholarship offers the more reasonable understanding for the use of the feminine figure in British poster art, as it acknowledges the agency of female viewers and the desire of artists to appeal to them. I will therefore follow the arguments of Iskin, Jobling, and Crowley and relate the use of the ideal woman to attempts to appeal to a female consumer through aspirational imagery. In doing so, I am moving poster scholarship along in two notable ways. Firstly, I will consider these ideas in relation to British poster art, a subject which has been notably absent from current scholarship which typically focuses on French nineteenth-century posters. Secondly, and perhaps more significantly, I will consider the agency of *women* creators in depicting this female aspiration in their poster art. Doing so will move beyond Jobling and Crowley's mere acknowledgement that 'the posters of the period were not produced … exclusively by male artists' to consider the impact and influence of these women, whose effect is often completely overlooked. [23]

Women became targets of two separate modes of advertising during the early twentieth century. The first, which focused on luxury products (such as cosmetics and clothing) or leisure activities (for example traveling to areas in London), offered ways for women to improve their lives through the purchasing of goods.[24] This approach capitalised on the new-found freedoms and spending power enjoyed by women and presented purchasing as a central part of achieving a modern female identity. Meanwhile the second mode, which

[23] Ibid, 101.
[24] As noted in Chapter Two these two types of advertising are described by Dorothy Sayers as 'the Thrifty Housewife' and 'the Typist capturing the affections of Prince Charming' in Dorothy L. Sayers, *Murder Must Advertise*, London, 1933, 180

focused on essential products (such as food or children's clothing) appealed to a woman's responsibility as a housewife. This approach asserted that it was a woman's responsibility to ensure the health and happiness of her family and presented purchasing commodities and goods as a means of doing this.

The majority of the posters discussed in this thesis were developed around the first of these advertising approaches and aimed to appeal to a woman by offering to improve her lifestyle. The ideal woman was an integral part of this approach as it could act as an aspirational image, whose appearance would draw a woman to an advertised product due to a desire to emulate the scene they were shown. The value of this was noted in 1938 by the advertising manager of Kayser Bonder Ltd, H Lewis Selby.[25] Selby claimed that a woman 'likes to think she looks like the picture' and will buy an advertised product in order to achieve or affirm this likeness.[26] These ideas have also been discussed more recently by Iskin who asserts that nineteenth-century posters became aspirational images for many women as, 'in selling late-nineteenth-century women a variety of goods, these kinds of posters sold women their new selves'.[27]

Because the posters discussed in this thesis were generally aimed at a middle-class consumer, who (as noted in Chapter Two) could afford to vary their spending in order to achieve these improvements, they needed to feature a feminine figure which best encapsulated the middle-class woman's ideal perception of herself. [28] These aspirational intentions go some way to explaining the use of the ideal woman. The middle-class women targeted were notable for their desire for conventional femininity which followed established values. The cultural historian Janice Winship has discussed this in her scholarship on the

[25] H Lewis Selby, 'How Women Respond to Advertising', *Hull Daily Mail*, 3rd May 1938, 9.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Iskin 'Advertising Modern Women', 335.
[28] The importance of the middle-class consumer is discussed in Matthew Hilton, 'The Female Consumer and the Politics of Consumption in Twentieth-Century Britain', *The Historical Journal*, 45.1, 2002, 103–28.

department store Marks and Spencer.[29] Winship argues that, during the interwar period, lower-middle class women were expected (and wanted) to maintain a 'nice and neat' appearance, as this signified them as respectable.[30] Building on Winship's work Carol Dyhouse describes similar ideas in her discussion of glamour in the 1920s and 1930s.[31] Dyhouse states that while working-class women wished to emulate the appearance of film stars, there was a 'premium placed on respectability, decorousness and keeping up appearances' amongst middle-class women.[32] As a result, 'grooming and daintiness (often a code for personal hygiene) were vital' while 'glamour' (in the form of red lipstick, nail varnish or low cut blouses) was heartily rejected as it was not believed to be in keeping with middle-class values.[33]

The type of femininity Dyhouse identifies can seen in the posters already discussed. Batty's portrayal of her feminine figure conforms to Dyhouse's ideas of 'decorousness', as the figure appears in a dress which covers its neck, chest, and legs. The same is seen in Burrell's poster where the figure's tunic obscures the secondary sexual characteristics of its body and instead shows off the figure's arms. Burrell's depiction of subtle make-up is also significant, featuring pink rather than red lips and a small amount of eyeshadow. This was in keeping with middle-class women's concerns around the cosmetic industry and their desire to wear what Richard Hornsey has termed 'a paradoxical make-up both visible and invisible at the same time'.[34] In presenting their figures in this manner Batty and Beard were focusing on a type of femininity that their desired middle-class viewer would wish to emulate. Women would therefore be tempted to travel to the places advertised on the posters and use the Underground in the hope that they would achieve the same appearance.

[29] Janice Winship, 'Culture and Restraint: The British Chain Store 1920 – 1939', *Commercial Cultures: Economies, Practices, Spaces,* Peter Jackson, Michelle Lowe, Daniel Miller and Frank Mort (eds), Oxford, 2000, 15-34, 27.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Carol Dyhouse, *Glamour: Women, History, Feminism*, London 2010, 91.
[32] Ibid 91, 92.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Richard Hornsey, '"The Modern Way to Loveliness": Middle-Class Cosmetics and Chain-Store Beauty Culture in Mid-Twentieth-Century Britain', *Women's History Review,* 28.1, 2019, 111–38, 112.

The poster artists' frequent depiction of slender figures was also in-keeping with this desire to present an aspirational character. Thinness was a key aspect of the ideal body during the early twentieth century and grew in importance as the 1920s continued onwards.[35] While the reasons for this importance have been debated, its connection to advertising is widely acknowledged, with many scholars recognising that advertisers both capitalised on and perpetuated the desire for thinness in their adverts.[36] Although thinness is implied in all three of the posters discussed so far in this chapter, it is most obvious in Beard's image, where the figure's arms and legs taper off, indicating slender wrists and ankles. The oversized appearance of the figure's skirt also emphasises this thinness, as its size makes the figure's legs appear smaller in comparison.

Another notable example of this focus on thinness can be identified in posters by Gladys Peto such as *Outings on the LNER* (fig.46). In this poster Peto depicts a countryside picnic attended by fourteen children and three women (presumably their mothers). The figures are depicted in Peto's trademark style, in which focus is placed on their tall bodies and slender frames, as well as their bobbed hairstyles and triangular shaped dresses. What is interesting however, is that the feminine figures, who appear to the left of the image, are notably thinner than the children. This is most notable when looking at the width of the figures' arms and legs and can also be seen in the more rectangular shape of their faces. This differing size suggests a deliberate attempt by Peto to emphasise the slenderness of her feminine figures, presumably to make them aspirational to middle-class female consumers. In line with this, the inclusion of chubby or 'bonny' children would also have achieved this

[35] Tamara D. Fangman, Jennifer Paff Ogle, Marianne C. Bickle , Donna Rouner, 'Promoting Female Weight Management in 1920s Print Media: An Analysis of Ladies' Home Journal and Vogue Magazines', *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 32.3, 2004, 213–53.
[36] Ibid, 223.

aspirational value, as such an image implies that the children are healthy and well fed, again signifiers of a desirable middle-class lifestyle.[37]

The need to appeal to the aspirational ideals of a female consumer also provides an explanation for the apparent adherence to the male gaze across many of the posters. Although gendered 'male' it has long been recognised that the male gaze is shared by both men and women due to its dominance in society.[38] Recognising this internalisation helps us to understand the posters, as the objectification of women in the works may have also appealed to female viewers who perceived their own value in this way. Alma Faulkner's poster *Come out of doors in your new dress* (1928) (fig.47) is an example of how the male gaze could be used in a poster that addressed a female audience. As in the other examples in this chapter Faulkner's poster focuses on a single, feminine, figure whose appearance corresponds with the ideal woman. Faulkner uses light grey and beige to suggest the figure's pale skin and includes thin lines to delineate its thin lips and delicate features, key symbols of its beauty. She also depicts her figure in a slip dress which sits just over its breasts and above its knees. The appearance of this dress helps to highlight the figure's slight frame — allowing its shoulders, arms, and legs to be exposed — and encourages the viewer to appraise the figure's body in a manner associated with the male gaze.

However, although Faulkner's poster is constructed in a manner which objectifies its feminine figure, the use of the possessive determiner 'your' in the title and its specification of feminine clothing (a dress) demonstrates the poster's clear address towards the female viewer. The figure shown in the poster is therefore intended to symbolise the female viewer's ideal perception of herself, encouraging her to use the Underground's services in order to

[37] The appeal of 'bonny babies' in advertising was noted in Chapter Two. It is also discussed in detail by Anne Higonett, *Pictures of Innocence,* London 1998, 51-71.
[38] Discussions on the internalisation of the male gaze feature in Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure in Narrative Cinema', *Film: Psychology, Society and Ideology, Introductory Readings*, Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen (eds). New York, 1999: 833-44. See also Abigail Solomon-Goudeau, 'The Legs of the Countess', *October*, 39, 1986, 65–108.

emulate the scene. The feminine figure's surroundings also emphasise its aspirational status. The figure appears in a dressing room readying itself for a night out in London. The room is carefully decorated with plush fabric curtains and a carver chair, the colours of which match the walls and floor. This lavish decoration, coupled with the clothes that can be seen hanging at the edge of this room imply that the figure enjoys a high level of wealth and status increasing the aspirational nature of the scene.

WHAT HAPPENED WHEN ARTISTS REBELLED?

So far over the course of this chapter I have demonstrated how portrayals of the ideal woman allowed women poster artists to produce successful advertising posters, which appealed to the middle-class consumers the companies wished to address. It is important to note however, that not all posters featured the ideal woman figure. In some cases, poster artists depicted a very different type of femininity in their poster art, eschewing the established and idealised expectations of their work. Taking such an approach could be problematic. It could lead to substantial criticism in the press, with journalists lamenting an artist's apparent disregard for social expectations and riling readers against a particular advert. Negative criticism could also dampen a poster's ability to produce positive responses towards its product or lead to a poster's removal from public display. Such an event could damage an artist's reputation and hamper their chances of being re-commissioned for further poster work.

Criticisms of posters ranged considerably during the early twentieth century. Some critics focused on the colour and size of a poster, complaining that the garish designs were 'vulgar' and disrupted or 'disfigured' the space they were displayed in.[39] This criticism will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, where I will address how such

[39] Harry H Peach 'The Advertiser and the Disfigurement of Town and Countryside', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 78:4022, 1929, 144-162, 162.

complaints resulted in the use of conservative styles in poster art. Other criticism focused on accusations of inappropriate or crude imagery in poster art, which was deemed unsuitable for public display.[40] Posters which featured the feminine figure were particularly vulnerable to this second strand of criticism due to the association between images of the female body and the sex worker (as discussed above).

This second strand of criticism was likely a further reason for the adherence to the ideal woman in poster art, as following expected ideology was a means of reducing the threat of condemnation or censorship. The disapproval directed towards posters that did not follow these values confirms this theory. In 1925 Doris Zinkeisen received considerable criticism for a poster she produced to advertise C B Cochran's revue musical *On with the Dance* (fig.48) a play for which she also designed the costumes. The original copies of this poster no longer exist, perhaps a symptom of the negative responses the poster received or else simply a result of the ephemeral nature of theatre posters which were not collected or preserved to the extent of those by major companies like London Transport. Regardless of the reasons for the loss of the original, it is still possible to discuss this poster using a reproduction printed in *The Daily Sketch.*[41] This reproduction, coupled with press reports on the subject, provide valuable insight into the poster's appearance.

The Daily Sketch reproduction shows that Doris Zinkeisen's poster featured three figures, who took up most of the pictorial frame. One figure, who is positioned behind the other two, is masculine, dressed in a top hat and tails. The two figures at the front are feminine, wearing frilled dresses and heels. All three of the figures are shown dancing, perhaps on a theatre stage. Their arms wave in the air wildly while the feminine figures' skirts have flown up due to the speed of their movements, revealing at least one of the

[40] Reports of such incidents include Anon., 'The Trade in South Wales', *Kinematograph Weekly*, 15th February 1917, 65; Anon., 'St Pancras Rotary', *St. Pancras Gazette*, 3rd March 1933, 7; Anon., 'The Poster Question', *The Stage*, 29th August 1901, 11; Anon. 'Ban on a Dance Girl Poster', *Westminster Gazette,* 23rd February 1927, 7.
[41] Photograph, *The Daily Sketch,* 3rd October 1925.

figure's bare legs. It is unclear where the legs of the second feminine figure are, although whether this is true of the actual poster or just the reproduction is unclear.

The poses of Zinkeisen's figures and their outfits share notable similarities to posters produced by the French poster artist Jules Chéret, which were created forty years before Zinkeisen produced this work. It therefore seems highly possible that Chéret's posters inspired this work. Zinkeisen's depiction of her dancing figures against an otherwise blank background bares considerable similarity to Chéret's poster *Folies-Bergère, La Loïe Fuller* 1893 (fig. 49). Other similarities include the depiction of flowing fabric around the figures' bodies in a manner which emphasises the speed of the figures' dancing. Finally, it is notable that the feminine figures' arms and legs are shapelier than those seen in other examples of British poster art, which typically focused on depicting waif-like body types, such as those seen in Peto's work. Again, this larger figure follows the imagery seen in Chéret's poster art, such as *Eldorado Music Hall* 1884 (fig.50), suggesting that his work formed the inspiration for Zinkeisen's poster.

Despite its similarities to Chéret's posters, many of which had been praised in France during the previous century, Zinkeisen's poster garnered considerable criticism for its portrayal of feminine figures. This criticism reveals the stricter censorship existing in Britain than continental Europe, as well the greater pressure British artists faced when producing their poster art. Stricter censorship came about as a result of both the more conservative views within British society and the stricter laws governing the displaying of imagery in public spaces. Most notable were The Indecent Advertisements Act of 1889 which restricted advertisements from displaying imagery that a court ruled as of 'an indecent nature', as well as the Vagrancy Act of 1838 which prevented the display of obscene works of art.[42]

[42] The Indecent Advertisements Act 1889; Vagrancy Act of 1838.

In line with these acts, most of the criticism directed at Zinkeisen's poster focused on proving that the image held sexual implications. The poster's chief opponent, Prebendary Carlile of the Church Army, argued that the exposure of the feminine figure's legs was 'an incentive to prostitution' due to the proactive display of flesh.[43] This claim was repeated in several newspapers who published Carlile's opinions alongside reproductions of the poster and calls for it to be taken down.[44] These calls continued even after Zinkeisen denied that the poster was intended to be provocative, asserting that although the poster was 'frolicsome' 'how anyone can read a sinister meaning into it is beyond my comprehension'.[45]

In keeping with Zinkeisen's denial of the poster's erotic nature the play that the poster advertised was not noted for erotic or explicit content. Instead, reviews of *On with the Dance* focused on the speed of the dancers' movements. The *Morning Post* described how 'at times the players seem mad, intoxicated with the desire to force their bodies to do something faster, faster' while a reviewer in *The Times* described 'the dancing [as] always preponderating'.[46] As the play's costume designer, it seems reasonable to assume that Zinkeisen would have been familiar with the play's themes and would have used these as the basis for her poster design. Indeed, the idea of speed can be recognised across the poster, suggesting that Zinkeisen's focus lay in accurately portraying the play's themes. For example, the indistinguishable bodies of the poster's figures suggest fast movement, which causes them to blur into one another as if a single moving object. Meanwhile, the poster's typography appears to swirl around the dancers as if propelled by their motion.

The criticism Zinkeisen received for this poster becomes even more notable when compared to posters which did not merit such critical responses. Throughout the 1920s and

[43] Anon. 'Mr Cochran and the Church Army: Criticism of a Poster', *The Morning Post,* 3rd October 1925, n/p.
[44] See for example, Anon., 'Mr Cochran and the Church Army' ; Anon., 'Storm over Poster by a Woman: Church Army Chief's Public Protest ', *Daily Graphic,* 3rd October 1925, n/p; Anon., 'Poster Protest: Prebendary Carlile and an Underground Picture' *Evening Standard,* 2nd October 1925, n/p.
[45] Anon., 'Storm over Poster by a Woman'.
[46] Anon., Mr Cochran and the Church Army'; Anon., 'On with the Dance' *The Times,* 1st May 1925, n/p.

1930s Charles Pears frequently depicted scantily dressed feminine figures (typically known as bathing belles) in the posters he produced for the railways.[47] For example, one poster by Pears which advertises *The Cambrian Coast* (fig.51) features a single feminine figure lying at the sea's edge, surrounded by sea foam and waves. The figure is dressed in a green bathing suit and a matching green swimming cap. Not only is the figure's costume styled in a manner intended to draw attention to the figure's secondary sexual characteristics, but the figure's pose also highlights these. Its body is contorted in a pose associated with the female nude: right hip is thrust into the air in a manner which shows off its legs and torso, legs crossed seductively, and arm lying limply at its side. These features make Pears' figure equally, if not more, provocative than Zinkeisen's, opening the poster up to the same criticisms levelled at *On with the Dance.*

Despite the provocative appearance of their figures, neither *Cambrian Coast*, nor any of the similar posters produced by Pears during this period, appear to have received the negative responses directed at Zinkeisen's work. Instead, they were widely appreciated when they appeared on the hoardings. Pears was regularly employed by companies such as the GWR and the SR to produce poster designs of this kind and these works were regularly included in exhibitions of poster art. Meanwhile the critic Percy Bradshaw even described Pears' posters as showing 'subtlety and reticence' in a review written for *Commercial Art* in 1928, suggesting that the works were believed to favourably promote the seaside scene.[48] While the wider acceptance of Pears' posters may be partially attributed to their later production date (the works were largely produced in the 1930s), such an explanation is not sufficient. Bathing belle imagery of the kind seen in Pears' poster had been present in British advertising since the 1910s, with poster artists such as F Whatler and William Barribal

[47] A discussion of the bathing belle's role in advertising can be found in Ralph Harrington, 'Beyond the Bathing Belle: Images of Women in Inter-War Railway Publicity', *The Journal of Transport History,* 25:1, 2004, 22–45, 27.
[48] Percy Bradshaw, 'The British Society of Poster Designers', *Commercial Art*, July 1928, 92.

implementing the figure in their designs.[49] There must, therefore, be other reasons as to why Pears' posters were more widely accepted than Zinkeisen's work.

The first of explanation for the wider acceptance of Pears' poster relates to the figure itself. Pears' depiction of a scantily clad feminine figure in a seascape conformed to an accepted 'type' of figure common in British art and advertising during the early twentieth century. This figure — the bathing belle —was a widely accepted image of seaside holidays and appeared on everything from adverts to postcards. The bathing belle figure became so ubiquitous that it was parodied by publications such as *Punch.*[50] In one cartoon *The Annual Problem* (fig.52), artist Lewis Baumer (1870 – 1963) mocked the bathing belle's inaptness for differentiating between holiday locations by depicting four fake posters advertising seaside locations.[51] Despite being adverts for different areas of the country (and even abroad) Baumer depicted all these posters in the same manner, featuring a single bathing belle figure wading in the sea. The cartoon's tagline 'Showing how helpfully the hoardings distinguish between the characteristic features of various localities' emphasised the figure's inadequacy as an advertising tool and undermined the posters that utilised it.

By mocking the frequent use of this figure Baumer's cartoon suggests that the British public may have become de-sensitised to the bathing belle's presence and were unlikely to be shocked by its appearance. This familiarity may have helped to temper the provocative appearance of Pears' poster when it appeared on the hoardings, making it appear part of a wider mass of British visual culture. Such familiarity was not applicable to Zinkeisen's poster which, as already noted, drew on French designs rather than British ones. Indeed, this connection to French design may even have increased distrust of Zinkeisen's poster. The

[49] The decision to focus on Pear's poster *Cambrian Coast* over earlier works is the result of three main factors. Firstly, Pears became closely associated with the bathing belle as the era went on making him the archetypal artist behind this form. Secondly, substantial responses to Pears' works exist, making public opinion on this easier to measure. Finally, original copies of Pears posters still exist, a fact which makes visual analysis much more effective.
[50] Examples of this include Arthur Wallis, 'So we went' *Punch*, June 1937; Lewis Baumer, 'Miss Daisy Dimple Prepares for the Camera Man', *Punch,* May 1923.
[51] Lewis Baumer, 'The Annual Problem', *Punch*, June 1914.

British post war years were characterised by a desire for 'English traditions in modern art', leading to a rejection of foreign influences and the art which displayed them.[52]

Another reason for the disjunction of criticism between the two posters can be linked to the location displayed in the works. It is likely that Pears' depiction of a feminine figure at the seaside may have helped to legitimise the figure's provocative appearance. The seaside's association with leisure and frivolity gave the space a carnivalesque status during the early twentieth century and this allowed for it to exist under different rules and morals than wider society.[53] According to Rob Shields this carnivalesque atmosphere of the beach holiday is played out most notably in 'the foolish, undisciplined body [which] is the most poignant symbol' of this space.[54] Such a claim suggests that the British public had a different tolerance for the provocative female figure within the seaside setting, as the carnivalesque atmosphere made different fashions and behaviours acceptable. This tolerance is likely to have transferred to poster advertising. Making the public more amenable to the scantily dressed feminine figure when it was in seaside posters, allowing Pears and others to continue to create these works without criticism.

In line with these ideas, Pears' presents the feminine figure as if it is part of the landscape itself. The body of the figure is oversized and appears monumental when compared to the groups of people shown in the background of the poster. It lies in a static pose and resembles sculptural reclining nudes. This makes the figure appear more like a statue than a real person and suggests that the feminine body is a sight available for a visitor to the beach to consume. Such a view was in keeping with attitudes of the period, which perceived the

[52] David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt, and Fiona Russell (eds), 'Introduction', *The Geographies of Englishness Landscape and the National Past 1880-1940,* Yale 2002, ix-xix, ix.
[53] Rebecca Mills, '"I Always Did Hate Watering- Places": Tourism and Carnival in Agatha Christie's and Dorothy L. Sayers's Seaside Novels', *Clues*, 37.2, 2019, 83–93; Darren Webb, 'Bakhtin at the Seaside: Utopia, Modernity and the Carnivalesque', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 22.3, 2005, 121–138.
[54] Rob Shields, 'The "System of Pleasure": Liminality and the Carnivalesque at Brighton', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 7.1 1990, 39–72, 55.

swimsuit wearing female body as something to be appreciated and enjoyed on seaside visits.[55] Again, increasing public tolerance to Pears' image.

The different actions performed by Zinkeisen and Pears' feminine figures also help explain the differing critical responses they received. Zinkeisen depicted her feminine figures throwing their arms, legs, and heads around in a kind of frenzy. While in keeping with the poster's theme of dancing, such imagery contrasts with the placid, ideal woman typically seen and widely accepted in British poster art. It also contrasts notably with the static pose of Pears' bathing belle. This difference is significant. Images of an out-of-control female body were widely feared during this time, due in part to their association with depictions of hysteria which came to prominence during the nineteenth century. A medical diagnosis typically given to women, hysteria was associated with the female body performing erratic or unexplained movements as a result of muscle contractions and was considered a sign of the weaker female psyche. [56]

Due to a belief that hysteria must be observed to be diagnosed the disorder was closely associated with visual culture and the viewing of the female body.[57] Press reports of the period reported on the signs of hysteria and instructed those witnessing these symptoms on what to do. In early 1925 a report by 'a family doctor' was published in a number of local papers.[58] This report asserted that 'every doctor is called out frequently' to treat cases of hysteria (a fact that the author of this piece appeared to view as an inconvenience).[59] The family doctor alleged in this report that the treatment for hysteria is to make everybody leave the hysterical patient alone for, 'hysterical girls must have an audience to perform to they stop at once if left alone'.[60] Beyond its disapproving tone this report is interesting because it

[55] John Hewitt, 'East Coast Joys: Tom Purvis', *Journal of Design History,* 8:4, 291-311, 300.
[56] Johanna Braun, *Performing Hysteria: Images and Imaginations of Hysteria,* Leuven, 2020, 50.
[57] Hope Margetts, 'Frenzied Flappers: The Hysterical Female in Early Twentieth-Century Social Dance', *Forum for Modern Language Studies*, 55.3, 2019, 339-350, 341.
[58] Anon., 'Talks on Health by a Family Doctor', published in *Diss Express*, 30th January 1925 n/p; *Westerham Herald*, 31st January 1925, n/p; *Suffolk and Essex Free Press*, 29th January 1925, 7; *Richmond Herald*, 31st January 1925, n/p.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

closely ties the concept of hysteria to that of performance, indicating that the illness would disappear without an audience. Such associations make it highly possible that those viewing Zinkeisen's poster may have related the image of a flailing feminine figure on stage with that of the hysteric woman and treated the poster with the same negative judgement.

This connection is likely to have been increased further by associations made between the hysteric's body and dance movements of the twentieth century, such as those portrayed in Zinkeisen's work. Hope Margetts has considered this, claiming that due to the similar movements of the dancers' and the hysteric's body, there was 'an obsessive comparison of dance and nervous disorders'.[61] In line with this, the poster itself advertises a play which featured songs by Noel Coward a playwright and composer whose work was associated with the very concerns of dance and hysteria that Margetts notes.[62] In 1933 Coward acknowledged this, stating

> This attitude, while temporarily good for business, became irritating after a time, and for many years I was seldom mentioned in the press without allusions to 'cocktails', 'post-war hysteria', and 'decadence'[63]

However, while Coward suggested that such associations were largely positive (if tiresome) for his career — a fact attested to by the glowing reviews the play received — this criticism does not seem to have been beneficial for Zinkeisen. Her poster was associated with prostitution rather than the 'decadence' Coward describes; an association which carried more negative implications.

[61] Margetts, 'Frenzied Flappers', 344.
[62] Ibid; Rebecca Cameron, '"Syncopated Nerves": Jazz and the Pathology of Modern Youth in Noël Coward's 1920s Theatre', *Modernist Cultures,* 15.2, 2020, 179–201.
[63] Noël Coward, *Introduction to Play Parade*, New York, 1933, vii–xvii.

This contrast between reactions to Coward and Zinkeisen provide a further explanation for the greater acceptance of Pears' poster art. It seems highly possible that Zinkeisen's gender was a major factor in the criticism her poster received. As a woman artist Zinkeisen is likely to have been subjected to greater scrutiny than her male contemporaries and is likely to have had more criticism levelled at her work. Such control contrasts with the perspective on women's poster art put forward so far in this thesis, in which this world has been viewed as one of considerable opportunity for women creatives. In line with this, it is notable that despite the bathing belle being commonplace in British advertising, there is no bathing belle imagery attributed to women artists. The closest example is Laura Knight's poster, *Yorkshire Coast* (fig.53) which features a group of four feminine figures playing with balls on a beach. Although two of these figures are dressed in bathing suits, they differ from their bathing belle counterparts due to their participation in a narrative (throwing a ball to one another) which provides them with a sense of autonomy and prevents them from simply appearing as decorative objects. In addition to this, the figures are not positioned in poses intended to seduce a viewer. Instead, focus is placed on the movement of their bodies and their physical prowess, as they contort their limbs to throw and catch a ball.

This absence of women authored bathing belle imagery may be evidence of women artists avoiding blatant sexualisation of their own gender and instead using narrative to present their figures as autonomous beings. However, given the evidence outlined in this chapter, this seems unlikely. A more feasible explanation is that the bathing belle was deemed an inappropriate subject for a woman artist, due to the same concerns which had prevented women from creating paintings of the female nude. Even as the opportunity to produce paintings of the female nude became available to women, through the opening up of life drawing classes during the 1870s and 1880s, there was still considerable backlash against women painting such works. The nude was perceived as morally reprehensible for the woman

artist and according to Jane Silcock, its significance in the art world led women to be 'torn between being "a good woman" or "a great artist"' when deciding whether to produce such paintings.[64] The notable similarities between the nude and the bathing belle suggest that similar restraints may have been placed on this subject, as the seductive connotations of the bathing belle made it inappropriate for a woman artist to portray this figure.

It therefore seems likely that the differing criticisms faced by Zinkeisen and Pears were down to more than the images themselves. Zinkeisen's status as a woman artist may have led her work to garner more attention and criticism than her male colleagues as critics disavowed the morality of a woman depicting a provocative female body in her poster art. Such a conclusion also suggests that the continued presentation of the ideal woman in posters was simply because no other form was acceptable for women to depict. As a result, women poster artists needed (and to a large extent did) conform to dominant ideologies in order to achieve success.

A Façade for Resistant Ideology

Despite the issues discussed above, considering the posters discussed in this chapter to be simply upholding dominant ideologies is not entirely accurate. Such a perspective overlooks the posters' significance as a notable part of the eras' visual culture and the resultant influence the works could hold. The poster hoardings' status as the 'art galleries of the public' gave poster art significance over ordinary people's lives and gave poster artists the power to alter or shape public opinion through their work. In this final section I will consider this importance and examine the appearance of the posters in relation to the growth in women's independence during the early twentieth century.

[64] Jane Silcock, 'Genius and Gender: Women Artists and the Female Nude 1870–1920', *The British Art Journal,* 19:3, 2018, 20-30, 20.

In an article on fashion plates Heidi Brevik Zender argues that many of the artforms that have traditionally been believed to objectify the female figure actually held value to women.[65] She claims that such works, played an 'overlooked…contribution to the formation of female identity' during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, by offering a much-sort-after image of women in the public space.[66] Brevik Zender's perspective is supported by Iskin's discussion of late nineteenth-century posters.[67] Iskin argues that 'posters which depicted urban women with agency participated in reshaping women's identities in the 1890s and early 1900s because they converged with a period in which the reception of such images was taking place in the midst of dynamic changes'.[68] Iskin's discussion of 'dynamic changes' can also be applied to the period discussed in this thesis, which included the granting of women's suffrage and a growth in the numbers of middle-class women entering the world of work.

It is therefore my contention that the ideas of Iskin and Brevik Zender can also be applied to the posters discussed in this chapter, as the works offered a physical depiction of the changes taking place. However, while Iskin's claims suggests that the depiction of women in poster art was simply a representation of changes occurring in society; at best lending support to these changes and at worst simply relaying them in picture form, I believe that the posters discussed in this thesis went beyond this. Due to their production by women artists, these posters can be understood as tools in the fight for middle-class women's independence and power in the public spaces, furthering their artist's agenda on this subject. The images can therefore be considered direct endorsements of growing freedoms for women.

[65] Heidi Brevik-Zender, 'Interstitial Narratives: Rethinking Feminine Spaces of Modernity in Nineteenth-Century French Fashion Plates', *Nineteenth-Century Contexts*, 36:2, 2014, 91–123.
[66] Ibid, 99.
[67] Iskin, 'The Pan-European Flâneuse' 338.
[68] Ibid.

Before considering the role of the ideal woman in facilitating the promotion of women's freedoms it is first helpful to consider the poster's role as a purveyor of ideology. A number of aspects of the poster's appearance support my hypothesis that they were produced in a manner intended to promote women's independence. The first example of this is the depiction of narrative in the posters, as the works featured feminine figures actively participating in activities such as visiting shops, traveling to the countryside, or riding the Underground. This inclusion of narrative was important because it moved the posters from simple depictions of a feminine body to images of female autonomy. These ideas are supported by Solomon Goudeau in an article on images of feminine display. [69] Here Solomon Goudeau argues that an absence of narrative reduced the image of a feminine figure (and thus real women) to mere commodities which could be consumed, bought, and sold by a viewer, the direct opposite of the posters discussed in this thesis. [70]

Narrative also ensured that the image within the poster could be emulated by a viewer. Faulkner's *New Dress* poster is an obvious example of this. The very title of this poster indicates its narrative structure as the adverb 'in' describes the act of donning an outfit to go somewhere. The image in the poster follows this. Faulkner presents her feminine figure getting ready for a night in London and uses several visual clues to foreshadow the night ahead. One of these is the dress the figure holds in its hands, which it gazes at thoughtfully as if imagining the evenings activities. Another is the coat and hat which appear lying on the chair next to the figure, representing its imminent journey out of the house and into the cold night. Crucially, there is no imagery pertaining to a masculine figure in this poster. This absence asserts the feminine figure's independence and suggests that her evening is for her own personal enjoyment and not facilitated by a man.

[69] Abigail Solomon-Godeau, 'The Other Side of Venus: The Visual Economy of Feminine Display', *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective*, Victoria de Grazia and Ellen Furlough (eds), California, 1996. 113– 150.
[70] Ibid.

The depiction of a specific location in many of the posters also related to the promotion of women's independence and again indicates that the artists' intentions went beyond the production of idealised imagery. By including topographic scenes in their posters, artists were able to designate these locations as feminine spaces and encourage other women to visit these sites. Such ideas relate to Deborah Cherry's discussion of women's art from the eighteenth century.[71] Cherry argues 'that the visual representation of women looking [in paintings] produced definitions of the appropriate targets of a feminine gaze'.[72] Similarly I would argue that the visual representation of a feminine figure in a specific location within poster art, helped to legitimise that space as a site appropriate for women.

Irene Fawkes' poster advertising the Underground's services to Kew Gardens offers an example of this promotion. The poster includes several clear features of Kew Gardens, making the location easily recognisable to a viewer. For example, the poster focuses on the Garden's iconic Palm house, which was the first building of its kind when it was built in 1844. Fawkes uses the domes of this building to frame her scene and provide a backdrop to the wider events. This building is then surrounded by a range of trees, hedges, and flowers, all of which were in keeping with the variety of plants on display at Kew. Many of these plants, such as the tree at the centre of the image and the two vine arches parallel the shape of the palm house and draw a viewer's attention to the centre of the scene where two feminine figures appear side by side. Although only small and in silhouette these two feminine figures embody the independent woman and, in this way, demonstrate the potential for women to visit Kew Gardens and move around freely.

As already noted, the depiction of the ideal woman was important to these aims. By presenting the feminine figures in their posters as independent, women poster artists were querying and undermining the established ideas of femininity and promoting a level of

[71] Deborah Cherry, *Painting Women: Victorian Women Artists,* London, 1993
[72] Ibid, 118.

freedom for women which, while becoming more apparent, was still contentious. This meant that the posters were greater challenges to dominant ideologies than they may first appear and opened the works up to criticisms, such as those discussed in relation to Zinkeisen's *On with the Dance* poster. By including the ideal woman in their posters however, artists were able to temper the potential threat of the work, using idealised imagery as a facade through which to present an alternate level of women's power.

A similar use of idealisation can be recognised in the suffragette posters which, as noted in Chapter Two, provided the foundations for women's involvement in poster art. In order to ensure support for their campaign, suffragette artists depicted feminine figures in their posters, whose appearance resembled that of the ideal woman. For example, in *Votes for Women* (fig.54) Hilda Dallas (1878 – 1958) depicted a feminine figure dressed conservatively in a high collared blouse and long skirt. The figure's hair is neatly quaffed and styled under a hat while its face includes delicate features and limited makeup. In contrast, anti-suffrage cartoons and posters depicted feminine figures that contradicted these expectations, in an attempt to decrease support for the female vote. These figures are notably different from the ideal woman discussed in this chapter. Lauren O'Hagan provides an in depth look at this. She notes that the feminine figures in anti-suffrage posters had 'unflattering features as pointy noses, buck teeth, and scraggly hair.[73] They also tend to be depicted in trousers — a symbol of their 'manliness'. In addition to this O'Hagan notes that these figures were shown wearing harsh contrasting colours as well as multiple patterns which 'serves to signal their abnormality' and create anger against the suffragette cause.[74]

The use of tempering methods was particularly important because, not only did many of the posters discussed in this thesis present female freedoms, but they also acted as a

[73] Lauren Alex O'Hagan, 'Contesting Women's Right to Vote: Anti-Suffrage Postcards in Edwardian Britain', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 21:3, 2020, 330-362, 345-346.
[74] Ibid 346; similar discussions on the representation of suffragette figures can be found in Katarzyna Kociołek, 'London's Suffragettes, Votes for Women, and Fashion', *Anglica. An International Journal of English Studies*, 27:1, 2018, 81–95, 84.

physical manifestation of women's growing presence and autonomy in public spaces. Due to their display in cities, the posters functioned as avatars of the female body on the street and accompanied the increased presence of 'real' women in these spaces. This was especially notable for posters printed in a double royal format or larger (635 x 1016 mm). This sizing could result in the figures on these posters appearing life-size if not bigger, resembling an actual woman in the city space (as seen on figure 26 and figure 55).

The potential unease surrounding the poster' resemblance of real women was likely exasperated by the phenomenon of 'living posters', in which models would appear, dressed as advertising figures in a living tableaux form.[75] Originating as displays or attractions at advertising conventions, in 1920 these 'living posters' were brought to the streets of London, where they formed a mile long publicity parade.[76] In 1927 a similar event at the British Advertising Exhibition placed particular focus on feminine figures, creating a display in which sixteen women appeared as recognisable advertising characters, who visitors could interact with.[77] The event was widely praised in the press, with journalists remarking on the 'delighted recognition from men, women and children alike'.[78] Meanwhile the *Daily News* indicated the conflation this could cause with reality, noting how the event meant that 'drawings of girls with whom everyone has fallen in love when waiting on Tube platforms or passing along the street here come to life'. [79]

At the same time as acting as avatars of women's existence in public, the posters also functioned as icons of women's presence due to their production by women artists whose signatures appeared on the bottom of the works. The impact of imagery produced by women in the (conventionally male) public space should not be overlooked, especially as women

[75] James Taylor, '"A Fascinating Show for John Citizen and His Wife": Advertising Exhibitions in Early Twentieth-Century London', *Journal of Social History,* 51:4, 2018, 899–927.
[76] Ibid, 906.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Anon., 'Advertising Exhibition', *Morning Post*, November 29 1920, n/p.
[79] Anon., 'International Advertising Exhibition', *Daily News,* July 19 1927, n/p.

remained underrepresented in art exhibitions during this time — women made up just 365 of the 1587 artworks shown at the RA summer Exhibition in 1929.[80] This meant that the mere existence of the posters was a challenge to dominant cultural norms, entrenching women's presence on streets and railway platforms and facilitating women's influence over how these spaces appeared. The posters can therefore be considered a triple icon of growing women's independence; they functioned as an image of a women participating in society, a representation of a woman in the city space, and a symbol of women's artistic production. All these functions are likely to have created a level of anxiety around the works that the ideal woman could help temper.

A Complex System of Ideas

When producing her *South Harrow* poster, Burrell was required to negotiate a complex system of ideas. Firstly, she needed her poster to effectively convey the benefits of Underground travel and encourage viewers to buy tickets to the advertised location. Secondly, she needed to produce a poster which conformed to expected standards of aesthetic value and which would be widely accepted by the middle-class viewers of her work. Finally, she is likely to have wanted to convey her own personal beliefs around women's independence and promote the freedoms which allowed her to produce her art. The figure of the ideal woman discussed in this chapter offered a means of fulfilling all of these demands. As a result, it came to be seen throughout advertising produced during the early 1920s and became a key motif of this time.

In exploring the continued depiction of the ideal woman within poster art this chapter has demonstrated the poster's significance as a conveyor of ideology. I have demonstrated how women poster artists combined dominant ideology with more progressive ideas in order

[80] *Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue*, London, 1929.

to put across important assertions of women's independence. This is particularly significant because of the posters' display in public arenas, where they could be viewed by all members of society. By presenting scenes of women's independence packaged as aesthetically pleasing imagery, poster artists were able to increase acceptance of these ideas amongst all sections of society, altering public expectations of the independent woman.

In addition to discussions of ideology, this chapter has returned to the close connection between women's roles in advertising and the earlier suffragette campaigns. I have shown that similar ideas of tempered imagery were used in both these campaigns, creating a link between them. Such ideas are important because they indicate an artistic legacy of suffragette artists that is rarely discussed or acknowledged in poster scholarship. They also add to discussions I laid out in Chapter Two of this thesis and undermine arguments that women's involvement in advertising stemmed solely from a desire to appeal to a female viewer. Indeed, although the images of female independence were certainly intended to encourage other women to participate in such activities, this was not their only purpose. The posters were equally intended to increase male tolerance of this independence, increasing acceptance of women in public spaces. The ideal woman was therefore intended to appeal to both genders, producing an impetus to consume, offering an aspirational image, and altering attitudes to women's public existence.

CHAPTER FIVE: A NEW ARTISTIC ARENA

In July 1928 the British Society of Poster Designers organised the first, and perhaps only, exhibition of its members' work.[1] Curated by artist and society member Stephen Spurrier, the exhibition was held in the Royal Institute Galleries, a well-regarded exhibition space which also functioned as the headquarters of the Society of British Watercolour Artists.[2] In recognition of the exhibition's significance, trade journal *Commercial Art* ran a three-page spread on the show in its July issue.[3] Here, the journal's correspondent Percy Bradshaw (1877 – 1965) (himself a well-known poster artist) praised the show and likened it to more traditional fine-art exhibitions.[4] In particular Bradshaw noted that the exhibition was organised so that each poster was 'shown in its own special section of the wall space'.[5] A comment which suggests that the posters were displayed horizontally across from one another, in an early iteration of the modern gallery hang. Bradshaw also praised the fact that 'most of the designs were framed uniformly in black, on a grey background' a display method which he deemed useful for emphasising each poster's artistic status.[6]

Beyond his review of the exhibition as a whole, Bradshaw also used his article to provide his views on the posters themselves. Norman Wilkinson's works were described as having 'a breadth, control, sense of atmosphere and a feeling for pattern', while Lilian Hocknell's were noted as being 'admirably drawn; full of spirit and vitality'.[7] Bradshaw also passed comment on individual artists' skills.[8] Freda Lingstrom was praised for her 'ability to obtain richness of colour by the simplest means'.[9] In contrast, Edward McKnight Kauffer was

[1] Percy Bradshaw, 'The British Society of Poster designers', *Commercial Art,* July 1928, 91-94.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid, 91.
[4] Ibid.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Ibid.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid, 93.
[9] Ibid.

criticised by Bradshaw, for producing works which are not 'as satisfactory as his earlier designs'.[10] Whether positive or negative, Bradshaw's reviews were notable for their focus on the aesthetic appearance of the poster rather than the work's advertising value; an approach which served to emphasise the poster's status as art. In line with this, the products or companies advertised were rarely noted by Bradshaw, except when this was used as a distinguisher, for example 'Underground posters by Dorothy Burroughes'.[11]

Bradshaw was not the only critic to visit the British Society of Poster Designers' exhibition or to comment on its artistic significance. A number of newspaper reviewers including those writing in the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Daily Mirror,* reported positively on the event and published their features in the spaces usually reserved for promoting fine-art exhibitions.[12] Other poster exhibitions were also reviewed in this way. In 1930 *The Sheffield Independent* published a photograph of 'visitors appreciating the beauty of L.N.E.R posters' at the LNER's Greaves Gallery exhibition.[13] Similarly, the exhibition of *British and Foreign Posters* at the Victoria and Albert Museum was met with considerable praise for its exhibits' artistic merits.[14] The curator of this exhibition, Martin Hardie, noted (and perhaps entrenched) this artistic significance in the exhibition's catalogue. Here Hardie declared that the quality of the posters and their aesthetic value meant that the event 'might almost equally well be described as an exhibition of lithographs and lithographic technique' as one of posters.

The above examples, coupled with the already established status of the poster hoardings as 'the art galleries of the British people', led to an environment in which the poster's status as art became firmly entrenched in Britain. In this context, poster artworks

[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] John English, 'The Alfresco Picture Gallery', *Daily Mirror,* 10th July 1928, 13; J.B, 'The Poster Designers', *The Manchester Guardian*, July 16th 1928, 16.
[13] Anon., 'Railway Poster Beauty', *Sheffield Independent*, 3rd April 1930, 12.
[14] Martin Hardie, 'Introduction', *British and Foreign Posters*, Exhibition Catalogue, Victoria and Albert Museum, London 1931, 5.

began to be afforded a significant level of attention and were discussed by critics in a manner almost comparable to that used in discussions of fine art. The boundaries between painting and poster art became so blurred that in some instances preparatory poster art paintings (the original image off which the lithographic print was made) were exhibited as works of art in their own right. One of the most notable examples of this is Anna Zinkiesen's submission of *The White Cliffs of Dover* — a painting which had originally been commissioned by the SR for its poster campaign — to the Royal Academy Summer exhibition of 1938.[15] Reviews of Zinkiesen's painting made no reference to its advertising connections or the fact that the same design was currently hanging on poster hoardings across the country. Instead, they focused on the painting's artistic merits. For example, a reporter for the *Illustrated London News* described it as a 'delightful Victorian scene… typical of her [Zinkiesen's] style'. [16]

Despite connections between posters and fine art existing during the early twentieth century, today art historians rarely turn to posters when providing examples or analysis of artistic achievement in Britain. While scholarship on Continental Europe presents poster artists such as Henri de Toulouse Lautrec as innovators and contributors to artistic developments, in the context of British art poster designers are seen as merely following trends.[17] The position British poster art holds in scholarship is echoed in Susan Sontag's essay on the poster written in 1970.[18] Here Sontag claims that

> posters are an applied art because, typically, they apply what has already been done in the other arts. Aesthetically, the poster has always been parasitic on the respectable arts of painting, sculpture, even architecture…As an art form,

[15] Royal Academy Exhibition Catalogue, London, 1938, 45.
[16] Anon., 'The Royal Academy 1938: A Diversity of Conversation Pieces', *Illustrated London News,* Saturday 30th April 1938, 13.
[17] For example Mary Weaver Chapin, *Posters of Paris : Toulouse-Lautrec & his contemporaries*, Exhibition Catalogue, Milwaukee Art Museum, June 1-September 9, 2012 and Dallas Museum of Art, October 14, 2012-January 20 2013, 2013; Ruth Iskin, *The poster : art, advertising, design, and collecting, 1860s-1900s,* New Hampshire, 2014.
[18] Susan Sontag, 'Posters: Advertisement, Art, Political Artifact, Commodity', *The Art of Revolution: 96 Posters from Cuba 1959-1970*, Donald Stermer (ed), New York, 1970, n/p.

> posters are rarely in the lead. Rather, they serve to disseminate already mature elitist art conventions. … A representative sample of posters done in any given period would consist mostly of work that is banal and visually reactionary. But most of what are considered good posters bear some clear relation to what is fashionable visually. [19]

Of particular significance in Sontag's description is her reference to the poster as a 'parasitic' art form, suggesting that poster artists utilised, or even took advantage of, achievements made by their fine-art contemporaries. This theory, coupled with the argument that most poster art is 'banal and visually reactionary', has been detrimental to the poster artist's status and has prevented the inclusion of posters within scholarly discussions, which often prize innovation and development above all else.[20]

As this thesis has demonstrated, women artists gravitated to poster art during the early twentieth century, due to the opportunities this field offered for work, status, and high pay. The failure to consider poster art in British scholarship has therefore been particularly detrimental to our understanding of women artists and has meant that a significant proportion have been omitted from art history, leaving their achievements unrecognised. In this final chapter I will attempt to combat this omission, demonstrating the artistic significance of British poster art and establishing the achievements of women poster artists.

This chapter focuses on two key artistic approaches of the early twentieth century and explores how women participated in these through their poster art. The first of these approaches is the modernist style, in which artists turned to imagery inspired by machines

[19] Ibid.
[20] Posters are notably absent from histories of British art such as David Peters Corbett, *The Modernity of English Art, 1914-30,* Manchester, 1997; Charles Harrison, *English Art and Modernism, 1900-1939,* London 1981; Lisa Tickner, *Modern life & modern subjects: British art in the early twentieth century,* London, 2000.

and technology. Within scholarship this approach is often associated with the pioneering, dominant, male artist, such as Percy Wyndham Lewis and Augustus John.[21] However, as I will argue below, this trend can also be seen in posters by women artists, a fact which queries the phallocentric focus of this scholarship. The second approach I will discuss is the trend towards conservative modernity and the espousal of 'British values' within art. This approach is seen in the work of artists such as Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer (1891 – 1959) who produced landscape scenes which presented Britain as a rural nation; an image which became particularly popular in the face of the substantial political, economic, and social unrest experienced during this time. Again, I believe this artistic approach was also utilised by women poster artists, a fact which has been almost entirely overlooked until now.[22]

In considering two artistic approaches which are widely discussed in art history, this chapter will not only demonstrate the artistic significance and impact of the women discussed in this thesis, but will follow other scholars such as Grace Brockington, Katy Deepwell, Zoë Thomas, and Maria Quirk in refuting traditional beliefs that women were absent from, or marginal to, the practice of British modern art.[23] I will demonstrate a number of ways in which women artists used the poster to respond and contribute to artistic developments and even suggest that their posters inspired approaches later seen in fine art. By doing so, I will also demonstrate the importance of acknowledging and studying poster art within the broader discipline of Art History and argue for the need for other scholars to turn to these art forms in their research.

[21] The celebration of male artists within art and art historiography is noted in Lisa Tickner in 'Men's Work? Masculinity and Modernism', Norman Bryson, Ann Holly Michael, and Keith Moxey (eds), *Visual Culture: Images and Interpretations,* New England, 1994, 42-84, 48.
[22] A brief mention of the connections between poster art and landscape painting can be found in Alexandra Harris, *Romantic Moderns: English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper,* London, 2015; Caroline Hickman, 'Clare Leightons Wood Engravings of English Country Life between the Wars', PhD thesis University of North Carolina, 2011, 88.
[23] See for example Grace Brockington, 'A "Lavender Talent" or "The Most Important Woman Painter in Europe"? Reassessing Vanessa Bell', *Art History*, 2013:36, 128-153, 129; Katy Deepwell *Women Artists Between the war,* Manchester, 2010; Katy Deepwell (ed), *Women Artists and Modernism*, Manchester, 1998; Zoë Thomas, *Women Art Workers and the Arts and Crafts Movement, Manchester*, 2020; Maria Quirk, *Women, Art and Money in England, 1880-1914: The Hustle and the Scramble*, London 2019.

It is important to note that not all the posters produced by women artists were pioneering or artistically significant. By the very nature of its subject, this chapter will focus predominantly on examples of poster art in which women poster artists engaged or experimented with new artistic approaches. However, as in all forms of art, many poster artists (both male and female) produced unremarkable advertising posters, which copied other designs or ignored artistic developments entirely. An article published in *Commercial Art* in 1923 provides some discussion of these works.[24] In it a journalist outlines some of the worst examples of poster art. They note that a poster advertising 'Pascall fruit Bonbons' is poor because 'it is a disjointed affair, confusing to the eye, which is made uncertain where to fix its gaze'.[25] Meanwhile two posters produced for Siemens lamps were branded by the journalist as 'aggressively ugly' and 'vehemently bad' respectively.[26] Acknowledging the existence of posters like these is vital in order to prevent a eulogization of poster art, in which the reality of the industry is ignored.

FREDA LINGSTROM: MODERNIST STYLES

Many of the posters produced during the early twentieth century drew from and engaged with the modern artistic developments that were gaining traction in Britain and continental Europe. These included the move towards abstract imagery in particular through the use of linear or geometric forms, as well as a focus on subject matter which celebrated the modern world and its associated technological and mechanical developments. Within current scholarship, the most widely recognised examples of this engagement are the posters produced by McKnight Kauffer, who is often perceived to be working in parallel with his

[24] Anon., 'A Constructive Criticism of the Two Poster Competitions', *Commercial Art,* January 1923, 64-68.
[25] Ibid, 66.
[26] Ibid.

fine-art contemporaries and given a status rarely afforded to British poster artists.[27] However, as will be demonstrated in this chapter, McKnight Kauffer was not the only artist to engage with these ideas. A number of women artists were also exploring this aesthetic, including Helen Bryce, Stella Steyn (1907 – 1987), and Catherine Mann.

A particularly notable example of a woman engaging with modernist styles in her poster art is the poster *Broads Holidays Afloat,* which was produced for the LNER by Freda Lingstrom in 1923 (fig. 56). Although unremarkable in its subject matter of three yachts at sea, a number of aspects of this poster's appearance demonstrate Lingstrom's engagement with the modernist aesthetic. Firstly, Lingstrom simplifies the subject matter in her poster. She depicts the three sailing boats through a series of basic shapes and the sea through wavy green lines. These shapes pare down the image and create a modern stylisation of the scene which follows the post Cubist interest in distorting reality. In addition, the colour scheme Lingstrom uses emphasises the poster's separation from reality. Each boat is depicted with bright white sails and a white hull, which make them stand out against the dark blue background of the poster. This creates a contrast which draws a viewer's eye and emphasises the appearance of the image over its subject matter.

Perhaps as a result of this innovative style, *Broads* was included in a number of contemporaneous exhibitions of poster art and was also widely reviewed in the press. *The Dundee Couri*er described *Broads* as 'delightfully imaginative art' while *The Spectator* claimed that it was 'a design of green, white and red yachts on a background of deep blue, altogether charming and conspicuous'.[28] Despite this, not everyone was open to the poster's simplified appearance. Anthony Bertram noted that when viewing the poster at the LNER exhibition at Kings Cross 'a member of the public condemned it because the masts of the

[27] For example Michael T. Saler, *The Avant-Garde in Interwar England : Medieval Modernism and the London Underground*, Oxford, 1999; Richard Cork, *Vorticism and Abstract Art in the First Machine Age*, London, 1976, 545.
[28] Anon., 'Art on the Hoardings', *Dundee Courier,* 16th December 1926, 7; Anthony Bertram, 'Material Reviews: Some Spirited Railway posters', *The Spectator*, 28th July 1923, 130.

yachts were not represented!'.[29] Although Bertram himself was dismissive of this criticism, it was a view which was shared by many. Walter Sparrow explained that many members of the public were 'alarmed and offended when a poster is not a window-pane', preferring traditional naturalistic designs to the modernist ones produced by artists like Lingstrom.[30] Another critic suggested similar ideas. Writing in the April 1932 edition of *The Telegraph and Telephone Journal,* J F Taylor stated that 'I must say that I deplore the descent into cubist and jazz muddle in posters… I may be old fashioned but give me something straightforward, something which in this hurried age "he who runs may read" and not have to stand up to puzzle out'.[31]

The substantial critical attention received by *Broads* indicates the significance of the poster and the innovative nature of its appearance. This becomes understandable when considering *Broads* within the LNER's wider output of the period. The majority of the LNER's posters of the early 1920s focused on traditional seaside scenes, in which naturalistic figures could be seen partaking in holiday pursuits. With its stylistic appearance and its absence of figures or topographic scenes, Lingstrom's poster directly opposed this style and instead adopted artistic approaches more common to the posters of the London Underground, where avant-garde styles were encouraged by the company's publicity officer Frank Pick. It would therefore appear that in producing *Broads,* Lingstrom created a watershed moment for the LNER, after which they moved towards the more stylistic poster art for which they are best known. This shift was so notable that it is this later work which has defined the LNER's output. Scholars such as Beverly Cole and Richard Durack have claimed that the LNER 'established a reputation for producing exciting and innovative work... [and] set a standard in poster design that none of its rivals could match'.[32]

[29] Bertram 'Material Reviews', 130.
[30] Walter Sparrow, *Advertising and British Art*, London 1924, 125.
[31] W F Taylor, 'Telephone Publicity', *The Telegraph and Telephone Journal,* April 1932, 142-145.
[32] Beverley Cole and Richard Durack*, Railway Posters 1923-1947: From the Collection of the National Railway Museum, York*, York 1992, 15.

Despite her apparent influence over this stylistic shift, Lingstrom has never been acknowledged for her role in encouraging these developments. The LNER's move to modernist styles has instead been pinpointed to 1926 (three years after Lingstrom's poster was produced) when five male artists, Tom Purvis, Austin Cooper. Frank Mason (1875 – 1965), Frank Newbould and Fred Taylor, signed three-year contracts with the company under the instruction of the publicity manager W M Teasdale.[33] Such a perspective attributes stylistic change to male artists and entirely ignores the achievements Lingstrom made through *Broads,* foregrounding male artists in a manner which is common within art history.

Perhaps even more significant is the fact that the LNER also seems to have ignored, or at least failed to satisfactorily recognise, the achievements Lingstrom made. Records from the company suggest that Teasdale considered offering Lingstrom a similar (although slightly smaller) contract in 1927, a year after the original contracts were made.[34] However, Lingstrom's name is crossed out on the record, a fact which Teri Edelstein believes indicates that this idea was never pursued.[35] It would therefore seem that, while Lingstrom was able to produce original ideas, she was unable to take advantage of the benefits of her innovation, as she gained neither the stability of a long-term contract or the development of an artistic legacy in modern scholarship.

KATHLEEN STENNING: ENGAGING WITH VISUAL CULTURE

Regardless of whether their success is recognised today, many other women poster artists also created modernist poster art. Often, these artists interacted with other forms of modern visual culture, engaging with and influencing illustration, cartoons, and poster art through

[33] Ibid.
[34] Teri J Edelstein, 'Graphic Opportunities Women artists and the Underground', *Art for All,* Exhibition Catalogue*,* New Haven Connecticut, Yale Arts Centre*,* June- August 2010, Connecticut*,* 2010, 105-126, 112.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Ibid.

their work. One example of this was the poster series *Travel Underground* produced by Kathleen Stenning for London Transport in 1925 (figures 57 – 60). Stennings use of modernist imagery in this poster series (discussed below) was in keeping with London Transports own aims. The company's publicity officer, and later managing director Pick, argued for modern and innovative poster designs. Pick described his desire for posters to use 'a novel point of view' or 'unusualness of aspect' which would 'disturb and destroy' the habits of city dwellers causing them to pay attention to the adverts.[36] Michael Saler has since argued that Pick's attitude encouraged artists to explore modernist ideas by legitimising the modernist style.[37] However, while Saler's claim focuses on male artists, I believe that this was also true of women artists who worked within these same visual developments.[38]

Stenning's *Travel Underground* series consisted of four posters, which were intended to promote the Underground as a means of escaping from the British weather. Printed in a portrait layout, each of these posters depicted an urban street scene which took up five sixths of the picture frame. These scenes were shown in different weather conditions depicting snow, the dark, rain, and lightning respectively. Like Lingstrom, Stenning used stylistic approaches to depict these conditions and turned to modern artistic trends such as the use of uniform shapes, geometry, and blocks of colour. For example, in the poster *Avoid the Wet* Stenning uses solid diagonal lines to depict rain, emphasising the downpour's power over an urban environment. Similarly, in *Take Cover,* Stenning depicts a thunderstorm through a single bolt of lightning which appears as a yellow zigzag at the centre of the poster. Again, this is a powerful image which suggests the weather's domination of the city.

In contrast to these cityscapes, the bottom portion of Stenning's poster focuses on the world below the city streets, depicting the Underground stations and train carriages. These

[36] Frank Pick, '"Underground" posters', *Commercial Art,* 1927, 139.
[37] Saler, *Medieval Modernism,* 102.
[38] Ibid.

sections promoted the poster's aim, which was to present the Underground as a beacon of hope beneath the city, providing shelter and solace against unpleasant and potentially dangerous weather conditions. Stenning evoked these ideas of safety through the use of bright (largely primary) colours, which make this bottom section stand out against the larger scene. In particular, Stenning's use of warm colours such as yellow and red emphasised the warmth of the Underground stations and trains and provided a notable contrast to the darker images above.

Beyond Stenning's stylistic approach, other aspects of the 1925 commission indicate her engagement with modern ideas. Her poster appears to take influence from a number of other sources, engaging with the visual culture of the time. One of these sources is earlier poster art, through which the Underground attempted to establish itself as 'the way for all'. The concept 'the way for all' first emerged in advertising campaigns from 1910 when the Underground attempted to promote itself to all passengers regardless of age, gender, or social status and became a slogan for the company in the following years. One of the most famous examples of the use of this phrase came in Alfred Frances' (dates unknown) 1911 (fig.61) poster by the same name, which focused on a well-dressed feminine figure who appears to be riding the Underground alone. Behind this figure a series of silhouettes represent other travellers who are welcome to use the Underground. These include an older masculine figure who walks with a cane, a young feminine figure traveling alone, and a masculine figure with a dog. The figures all walk in the same direction, as if suggesting that they are all boarding the same tube train. Following on from this, it is notable that Frances uses green and purple as the main colour palette for this image. These colours match those used by campaigns for women's suffrage which were gaining momentum when this poster was produced. Frances is thereby relating the Underground to the growing autonomy and enfranchisement of women, both of which were associated with the modern world.

Although stylistically more modern than Frances' design Stenning's posters also depict a multiplicity of characters traveling on the Underground. In doing so the posters reassert the Underground's status as a service for all. In *Avoid The Wet* a number of figures are depicted in a crowded carriage. To the left a fashionably dressed couple can be seen engaging in conversation while on the right a maternal figure and a child stare out the window their gaze reaching that of the viewer. Other figures included across the series are families that walk together through the stations, figures in business suits, and feminine figures who walk around independently. Such figures present the Underground stations and trains as a space in which traditional social and gender restrictions are removed, allowing everyone equal access.

As well as representing the range of travellers using the Underground, the figures Stenning depicts also provide a humorous element to the posters. The thin and elongated shape of the bottom section resembles a comic strip from a newspaper, a form which was becoming increasingly popular during the 1920s due to strips such as 'Rupert the Bear' (*Daily Express*).[39] The comic strip format is particularly fitting because Stenning uses these images to offer a satirical take on the Underground passengers, mirroring satirical cartoons in publications such as *Punch*. In *Take Cover,* for example, Stenning depicts a crowded tube carriage in which a variety of individuals can be seen traveling. At the centre a feminine figure can be seen holding on to a small child, who is staring out of the window with its arms raised in haphazard fashion. Next to them the figure of a businessman is seated reading a broadsheet newspaper, the large pages of which obscure the figure's entire body apart from its legs and the top of its hat. This figure's legs appear spread apart and seem to be encroaching on the space of the couple beside it who sit close together as if they have been forced into the corner of the carriage by the businessman's stance. Such a pose —which

[39] Mary Tourtel, 'Little Lost Bear', *Daily Express,* 8th November 1920, n/p.

would now be considered 'manspreading' within the current lexicon — is a familiar and well recognised sight. While it did not hold such cultural significance or recognition during the 1920s it seems likely that this pose would still have been familiar to Stenning's audience, creating humour when seen in her work.

Stenning also appears to have been drawing on other imagery to inspire her depiction of London both above and below ground. The significance of the Underground's position below the city was emphasised in illustrations produced during this period. In these, the Underground's unique and mechanically advanced structure was emphasised through the depiction of a cross section of the city, with the streets shown at the top of the image and the Underground tunnels below. These images were printed in newspapers such as *Illustrated London News* where they were used to demonstrate the Underground's innovative nature and its power to disrupt the landscape in a manner not previously seen.[40]

Lynda Nead acknowledges the importance of above/below ground imagery to the Underground.[41] Nead notes that this became 'a favourite technique for representing the railway system' fifty years before Stenning's poster.[42] She notes that such imagery offered

> visual spectacles that were unprecedented in the metropolis…in these images the full wonder of the Underground could be displayed; an apparently normal street above the ground and then, below the gas pipes and sewers, another parallel world of passengers, locomotives and airy tunnels illuminated by gas. [43]

[40] Illustration, *Illustrated London News*, 28th May 1864, n/p.
[41] Lynda Nead, *Victorian Babylon: People, Streets and Images in Nineteenth-Century London*, Yale, 2005.
[42] Ibid, 39.
[43] Ibid, 38.

Similar imagery was also used in the years immediately following Stennings work. In 1926, for example, *The Sphere* published a cross section of Waterloo station in order to promote the newly installed escalator.[44] Meanwhile, in 1929, D Macphearson was commissioned to produce a drawing which showed the underground tunnels of Piccadilly Circus station, which had been expanded between 1925 and 1928 (fig. 62). By drawing on this innovative two-part imagery Stenning was able to reassert the 'wonder' of the Underground through her poster art. As a result, not only did the posters present the Underground as a separate world but they emphasised the wonder of such a modern invention.

Stenning's poster therefore indicates that artists were drawing on other art forms when producing their posters, using these to inspire their own works. This places the poster within the wider artistic discourses of the interwar period and suggests a level of interaction between visual culture — such as cartoons, diagrams, and illustrations — and poster art. In addition to this, Stenning was not the last artist to implement the cross-section layout into her poster art. Frederick Herrick's poster *It is Cooler Below* (fig. 63) followed the same above/below ground split as Stenning's work in 1926, although this time making it appear as if a tube train was circling the earth's core. Meanwhile in 1929 Margaret Calkin James (fig. 64) also produced a poster using the same division of space, depicting a tube train running below a theatre. Both examples demonstrate a lineage within poster art as artists drew on earlier posters as inspiration for their own.

SYBIL ANDREWS: VORTICISM AND POSTER ART

While Stenning drew on specific representations of the Underground as the basis for her poster art, in other cases poster artists were inspired by styles and movements. One notable example of this is an engagement with the Vorticists, an artistic faction which was

[44] Anon, 'Burrowing Beneath Waterloo Station', *The Sphere,* 17th July 1926, 74.

established in Britain in 1914 by the artist Wyndham Lewis. Vorticism was characterised by the use of mechanistic imagery and a focus on portraying the urban environment through abstract forms. It followed many of the tenants of Futurist art but was separated by the doctrine it was based on, which was laid out in the Vorticist manifesto *Blast.*[45] A number of artists including Jacob Epstein (1880 – 1959), Frederick Etchells (1886 – 1973), William Roberts (1895 – 1980), David Bomberg (1890 – 1957), and Edward Wadsworth (1889 – 1949) engaged with Vorticist ideas and helped to produce the group's manifestos of 1914 and 1915. Many of these artists also participated in the Vorticist exhibitions which were held in London in 1915 and in New York in 1917.[46]

Despite being a fine-art movement, the history of Vorticism is intertwined with that of poster art. The poster was discussed by Lewis in the Vorticist's second manifesto *Blast 2*. He claimed

> if Tube Posters, Magazine Covers, Advertisement and Commercial Art generally, were ABSTRACT, in the sense that our paintings at present are, they would be far less harmful to the EYE, and thence to the minds, of the Public.[47]

Written in 1915, Lewis' statement is an early iteration of the belief that the poster could interact with and develop from, modernist fine art. Given Lewis' dominance within the artworld it is possible that his arguments would have inspired poster artists, including the women discussed in this thesis, encouraging them to turn to Vorticism as inspiration when producing their poster art.

[45] Percy Wyndham Lewis (ed.), *BLAST 1*, London, 1914; Anbar Onar, and Johann Pillai, 'Tracing the Performative: F.T. Marinetti, C.R.W. Nevinson, and the English Futurist Movement', *A Dilemma of English Modernism,* Michael J.K. Walsh (ed), Delaware, 2007, 47-71.
[46] A full history of vorticism can be found in Cork, *Vorticism*, Volumes 1 and 2.
[47] Percy Wyndham Lewis, 'A review of Contemporary Art', *BLAST 2,* 1915, 47.

In more recent scholarship there have been suggestions that the relationship between poster art and Vorticism goes beyond the former being influenced by the latter. Critic Richard Cork has argued that, while Lewis' involvement waned following WW1, Vorticism itself did not end in 1919 as has been previously suggested. Cork argues that 'the principal way in which the lessons of Vorticism were to be disseminated in England after the war was through the outstanding posters by McKnight Kauffer for newspapers, department stores, and the Underground'. [48]A similar idea was put forward by critic Florence Hallet in 2019 in reference to McKnight Kauffer's poster for the *Daily Herald*, printed in 1919.[49] Hallet claimed that the *Daily Herald* poster 'exploits the graphic potential of Vorticism, the rhythmic motion of birds in flight heightened through tonal contrasts and the simplification of forms and planes'.[50] Such arguments are significant because they suggest that Vorticism was continued, and even advanced, through the medium of poster art. However, while both of these critics imply that these developments were achieved solely through the work of McKnight Kauffer, it is my contention that other (women) artists also contributed to these advancements, a fact which has been overlooked.

The involvement of women artists in continuing and extending the Vorticist movement is particularly significant because women artists have traditionally been absent from narratives on Vorticist art. Despite women — most notably Helen Saunders (1885 – 1963) and Jessica Dismorr (1885 – 1839) — being involved in the original vorticist movement, the role of women artists has largely been overlooked, both by those participating in the group and those writing about it in subsequent historical scholarship. For example, in his 1915 painting *Vorticists at the Restaurant de la Tour Eiffel: Spring, 1915* (Tate, 1915) the artist William Roberts (1895 – 1980) positioned the figures representing Saunders and

[48] Cork, *Vorticism*, 280.
[49] Florence Hallett, 'The Pioneers of Modern British Printmaking', *Apollo Magazine*, 2019, https://www.apollo-magazine.com/cutting-edge-modernist-british-printmaking/ (accessed May 2022).
[50] Ibid.

Dismorr behind the figures of other Vorticist members, a stylistic decision that implied the women were outside of the wider discussions and meetings involved in the group. Similarly, the financier of the group, Kate Lechmere, was also dismissive of the women's involvement. Lechmere undermined Saunders and Dismorr's artistic achievements by claiming that they were merely 'little lap dogs who wanted to be Lewis' slaves and do everything for him'.[51] More recently Brigid Peppin has suggested that the dismissal of Saunders and Dismorr has been compounded further by the fact that few Vorticist artworks by either artist survive, making it difficult to discuss their impact in scholarship.[52]

Recognising the existence of Vorticist poster art by women is therefore highly significant. Doing so acts as a way of not only expanding our knowledge of the poster art medium, but also as a means of reconsidering the involvement of women artists within Vorticism. One of the most notable examples of women's engagement with Vorticism are the posters of Sybil Andrews who created adverts for London Transport during the 1930s. In these posters Andrews drew on her training at the Grosvenor Art School (discussed briefly in Chapter Three) a college which has been frequently related to the continuation of both Vorticism and the rival Italian movement futurism, due to the work of its teacher Claude Flight (1881 – 1955).[53]

While Hana Leaper has argued convincingly that the linocuts produced by Andrews and her fellow students hold more similarities to futurism that Vorticism, because they show 'vastly different subject positions' than the latter, I believe that Andrews' poster art contradicts these trends.[54] One example of this is the poster Andrews produced for the Epsom Derby (fig.65). Here Andrews depicted a horse race from above in order to display the horses, as well as the cars and watching crowds. The racecourse itself is shown through a

[51] Lechmere to Richard Cork in Cork, *Vorticism,* 150.
[52] Brigid Peppin, 'Women That a Movement Forgot: The Vorticist's I, *Tate Etc,* 22, 2011.
[53] Hana Leaper, '"Old-fashioned modern": Claude Flight's Lino-Cuts and Public Taste in the Interwar Period', *Modernist Cultures*, 11:3, 389-408.
[54] Ibid, 399.

turquoise spiral on which the horses and their riders appear in orange and red. Darker turquoise lines appear behind each horse, implying that they are moving at speed and leaving a trail of dust behind them. Andrews' depiction of these horses is significant. Whilst Futurist artists focused on movement and the pace of life, which were shown through blurred images and repeated lines, the Vorticists focused on static imagery, showing speed as a moment in time which has been paused. In line with this, the Vorticists described their art as being at the 'heart of the whirlpool… a great silent place where all the energy is concentrated'.[55] Andrews' depiction of Epsom is in keeping with these ideas, as her horses appear mid-jump, their legs spread apart, and riders hunched over as if frozen in time.

Andrews produced her poster art under the pseudonym Andrew Powers, a name she adopted in recognition of the role her friend and studio companion Cyril Powers (1872 – 1951) played in facilitating her work.[56] It remains debated how much influence Powers himself held over the final design of these posters, but most sources agree that his role was one of consultant rather than producer, with the final works being the product of Andrews alone.[57] It also remains unclear whether Andrews believed a male pseudonym to be helpful to her career. The evidence uncovered in this thesis suggests that the artist's gender had limited impact on their opportunities to produce poster designs. However, given the marginalisation of women within the Vorticist movement it seems possible that an artist like Andrews may have perceived a male pseudonym necessary to gain respect for work in this avant-garde style.

Andrews' poster *Wimbledon* (fig. 66) is another example of her engagement with Vorticist ideas. Produced for London Transport in 1933, this poster was intended to encourage passengers to use the Underground and 'special bus' to travel to the Wimbledon

[55] Wyndham Lewis, *Blast 1*.
[56] Jenny Uglow, *Sybil & Cyril: Cutting through Time*, London, 2021, 221.
[57] Ibid.

tennis Championships. Such posters were an annual feature on the Underground's lines and the commission followed a series of others by artists such as Herry Perry, LB Black (dates unknown), and Gerald Dickson (dates unknown), all of whom chose to focus on different elements of the event. In 1925 for example, Black depicted a doubles game as if viewed from the court. Meanwhile, two years before Andrews' poster, Perry depicted the tennis ground as if viewed from the stand, presenting the end of the court obscured by a ball boy.

In her *Wimbledon* poster, Andrews broke away from these previous depictions and moved towards a semi-abstract design. Andrews depicted the figures of two tennis players suspended in space in the poster's corners and rallying a ball between them. Focusing on the power and force of the players, the poster draws on a number of aspects of Vorticist imagery to present their athleticism and again focuses on a single moment in time. Andrews depicts the top figure with its right hand stretched out holding a racket while its left arm bends to the shape of its torso, a depiction which seems to celebrate the strength of the player. Meanwhile, the bottom figure is depicted as if leaping into the air, its legs moving away from each other, in a manner which evokes the player's flexibility and power.

Another poster by Andrews, *Football* (fig.67) also focuses on the power of sportsmen. This work depicts the outline of a male footballer behind a block of printed text, in a complex balancing of image and word. Andrews herself has discussed her struggles in producing the poster and these are recorded by Jenny Uglow in her book *Sybil & Cyril.*[58] Andrews apparently stated 'I was tearing my hair out, there was not an inch of space left for my design & then I had a brainwave… to design a large "footballer" in colour to add action & print the whole sheet of fixtures on top in black'.[59] Again, as in *Wimbledon,* Andrews' depiction of her footballer evokes a sense of athleticism and the 'action' she discusses. The footballer's elbows and head are depicted as sharp edges, giving the figure an angular appearance.

[58] Ibid, 223.
[59] Ibid, 224.

Meanwhile, the figure's legs are depicted using curved lines which evoke muscles and emphasise the power of its body.

Andrews' depiction of a footballer in this way also bares a strong resemblance to the dancers drawn and sculpted by Vorticist artist Henri Gaudia-Brezska (1891 – 1915). Gaudia-Breszka's works, such as the sketches (fig. 68) and final sculpture of *Red Stone Dancer* (fig.69) use the same simple lines as those seen on Andrews' poster. Moreover, as in Andrews' work Gaudia-Brzeska's images were intended to be a celebration of the body's movement – focusing on muscles and contortions of a body rather than a naturalistic depiction of the human figure. Again, Andrews would have been aware of Gaudia-Brezskas' work through her time at the Grovesnor school. Not only was Flight inspired by Gaudia-Brezskas' work and vocal in his praise of the artist, but Flight also included Gaudia-Brezskas' art in a 1929 exhibition of lino cutting which also featured three works by Andrews.[60]

Andrews' posters also demonstrate her experimentations with typography, itself associated with Vorticist art. Soviet typographer El Lissitzky (1890 – 1941) noted the significance of the Vorticist manifesto *Blast* in the evolution of lettering styles.[61] He claimed that the manifesto featured text which was 'large and elementary in presentation, set almost exclusively in block letters', before going on to claim that 'today [1926] this has become a feature of all modern international printed matter'.[62] Lissitzy's claim is interesting because Britain has traditionally been perceived as being behind other European countries in terms of typographic design. Many British artists did not produce the lettering on their poster art, with the printer adding this when producing the final work. Mary Adshead's poster for the London Underground, *Always An Open Way Always Something New* 1937 is such an example.

[60] Ibid, 141.
[61] El Lissitzky, '"Our Book" (1926)', *El Lissitzky: Life, Letters, Texts*, Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers (ed), London, 1968, 362.
[62] Ibid.

Preparatory artwork for this poster reveals that the design Adshead submitted did not contain the typography which would later appear on the final work. As a result, the text appears below the scene like a gallery label, creating a somewhat disjointed image.

In contrast to Adshead's poster, *Wimbledon* demonstrates Andrews' skills in typography, suggesting that she followed the Vorticist's understanding of the importance of this. Andrews positions the poster's title across the centre of the image so that it resembles the net over which the figures are playing, creating unity between image and text. In addition to this the title itself is printed in black sans serif block capitals, which are altered to ensure that they are all the same size. This means that the title resembles the printed title of BLAST, which also appeared diagonally across the front cover of the manifesto, although at a steeper angle than Andrews' text. Andrews' poster output therefore demonstrates the influence of fine art on poster design, as well as the potential to continue or expand an artistic movement through the production of poster art.

ANNIE FLETCHER: ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENTS

In Chapter Two I argued that the opportunities poster art offered for experimentation were one of the key reasons for women's involvement in this medium and led to the promotion of poster art to (and by) women artists. These ideas are equally significant to the discussions in this chapter, as the opportunities poster art offered resulted in substantial artistic achievements and developments. For this reason, it is important to reiterate why the poster was so notable as an experimental medium. The continued ostracization of women from the art world forced women artists to work in styles which assured their acceptance and allowed them to make sales. These restrictions were reported on in articles of the period. The career correspondent for the magazine *The Quiver* noted in 1912 that the aspiring woman artist should 'be quick at adapting her talent to the moods and modes of perpetually changing

fashion and styles' implying that — unlike men — women should be led by artistic trends when producing fine art.[63] In contrast to this, within poster art experimentation was encouraged. This can be seen in Roger Fry's claim that it easier 'to take risks' in poster art than fine art and Pick's indication that it required new avant-garde styles. [64] The poster thus offered a new opportunity to women artists, making the medium appealing to women who wished to engage with innovative artistic approaches in their work.

It would seem that many of the women producing poster art were taking advantage of these opportunities for experimentation. One example of this is the poster *Shop Between Ten and Four* (fig. 70) by Annie Fletcher in which the artist was experimenting with cubist approaches, depicting a carriage scene in a semi-abstract style. Fletcher's poster formed part of the Underground's wider campaign to deal with carriage congestion by encouraging women to travel on the Underground at set periods of time (between 10 and 4), rather than at rush hour or during commuting hours. It was thought that such travel times would relieve crowded carriages for (assumed male) business travellers, whilst at the same time allowing leisure travellers and shoppers (who were assumed to be women) to enjoy their journey in peace. The poster therefore needed to show the distinctions between these travel times, emphasising to the female viewer the benefits of traveling after and before rush hour.

Before considering this poster and its avant-garde appearance, it is important to consider its purpose in greater detail. By presenting women as leisure travellers, Fletcher's poster constructed a gender difference amongst those riding the Tube and placed a ranking of importance on its passengers. Men, who must travel for work, are given priority amongst the Underground's travellers and are deemed worthy of traveling at the busiest and most in-demand times. Women, meanwhile, are ranked as less important and designated a time outside the peak travel period – when the Underground would otherwise be empty. This is

[63] Winifred 'The Women's Work Bureau' *The Quiver,* 47:8, 1912, 809.
[64] Roger Fry, 'Art and Commerce', (1926, Hogarth Press), *Journal of Cultural Economics* 22 1998, 49-59, 58.

significant because it contradicts the Underground's own self-promotion as 'a way for all', as discussed in relation to Stenning's poster, and instead suggests a prioritisation of male travellers — specifically male business travellers — over everyone else.

The travel between ten and four message is also indicative of the Underground's confidence in its services and the public's reliance on it. This confidence was so high that the company was willing to actively discourage half of the population from traveling at particular times. Moreover, the Underground appears to have been willing to risk male travellers being discouraged from traveling after seeing the depiction of a crowded tube (discussed in detail below), clearly believing that their service was valuable enough to counter such obvious unpleasantness. In line with this, it is important to note that the poster implicates women travellers as the reason for these unpleasant conditions. Such beliefs are likely to have been internalised by travellers, leading people to shame women for traveling at certain periods of the day. [65]

The fact that Fletcher, as a woman, was employed to produce a poster promoting the priority of male travellers is therefore interesting. By producing this work Fletcher was implicated in the controlling of her own gender, entrenching the position of women as consumers rather than workers; a position which directly opposed her own achievements as a professional artist. This conflict suggests that artists had limited connection to the poster they were producing, focusing on the aesthetic elements of it rather than its ideas. This in turn supports the conclusions of Chapter Two in which I argued that women were employed based on artistic ability and not their ability to appeal to a female audience. McKnight Kauffer also supported these ideas in a lecture given to the Royal Society of Arts in 1938.[66] Here he claimed that

[65] Complaints around women causing problems during rush hours can be seen throughout this period as many blame the queues and congestion on 'shoppers' and 'housewives' travelling unnecessarily. See for example Anon. 'To relieve Rush Hour Congestion' *Sheffield Independent,* 9th January 1936, 3; Anon. 'Shoppers and Rush Hour Travel', *Halifax Evening Courier*, 8th November 1946, 4; Anon. 'Women Figure in Rush Hour Mystery' *Daily Herald,* 23rd September 1937, 4.
[66] Edward Mcknight Kauffer 'Advertising Art: the designer and the public', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 87:4488, 51-70.

> The artist who is not in advertising is not concerned with anything except with his relations with his subject … For the artist in advertising, however, there is the problem of how to transmit something of this relationship between himself and his work to the public through the more practical medium of the advertisement. He must serve two, if not three, masters. Himself; the advertiser; the public.[67]

Following McKnight Kauffer's ideas, Fletcher relays the Underground's travel time campaign clearly in her poster, regardless of her own feelings on the subject. She does this by using the design of a clock to represent the separate travel times, splitting a circle through a diagonal line. In the bottom half of this circle, where the hours four to ten would appear on a clock, Fletcher evokes the crowded carriage. Here she depicts multiple figures both standing and sitting, as the carriage's crowded status means not everyone has access to a seat. In contrast, on the top half of the circle Fletcher depicts the quieter travel time. This image features just two figures — in this case both feminine — who sit calmly in an otherwise empty carriage. The figures are shown with their legs crossed and hands in their lap, emphasising the benefits of traveling within the allotted period, where a passenger was able to sit calmly, have space for their shopping, and enjoy their journey without disruption.

The colour scheme Fletcher uses in this poster also helps to promote this message. All the figures Fletcher depicts appear in red, grey, white, black, and beige, with solid blocks of these colours being used to delineate the shape of their bodies. In the bottom half of this image the use of these matching colours helps to evoke the crowded nature of the carriage. Here the colours appear in a kind of mosaic pattern, creating a cluttered atmosphere

[67] Ibid, 66.

reminiscent of many people in different outfits being crammed into a small space. This sense of claustrophobia is furthered by the use of grey to represent the carriage space, as the dull tone makes the carriage appear smaller. By contrast, in the top section of the circle Fletcher surrounds her figures with white space, and only uses grey to represent the windows and doors of the carriage. This use of white serves to separate the blocks of colour used to depict the figures, evoking the quieter travel time and creating a substantial contrast between the two halves of the image.

Beyond its role in promoting the poster's message Fletcher's colour scheme also indicates the artist's interest in the machine aesthetic. Fletcher's use of the same colours to depict the travellers, their transport, and the timekeeper (the clock outline) creates a sense of unity between these elements and implies that the figures are part of a machine. Such a concept was a key tenet of modernist aesthetics such as Futurism or Vorticism, as artists celebrated the merging of man and technology in their art. Fletcher's simplification of her figures can also be understood in relation to this. Almost all the figures depicted in the poster appear to have blank faces without features such as eyes, nose, or mouth. The only exception are the two figures wearing glasses in the bottom section of the image, an addition which indicates the location of the figures' eyes but not the eyes themselves. Through this elimination of facial features Fletcher is again able to suggest the merging of humans with technology. Such a depiction removes the personal elements of a figure and makes them appear uniform and characterless, as if they are merely cogs in a machine.

The feminine figures depicted by Fletcher are notable for their fashionable appearance, and appear wearing long fur-trimmed coats, pointed boots, and sporting short, bobbed hair. Such imagery is in keeping with the focus on the idealised figure discussed in Chapter Four and relates this poster to other poster designs from this time. In addition to this, the combining of fashion with the machine aesthetic matched developments in France, where

Sonia Delaunay (1885 – 1979) used elements of this aesthetic — such as geometrical lines and shapes — to produce her fashion design.[68] Tag Gronberg has considered Delaunay's work in detail, claiming that the designer used machine-like imagery in order to define the wearer of her clothes 'as modern through an association with the technological iconography of [the] avant-garde'.[69] Fletcher seems to be doing the same thing as Delaunay, combining fashion with the machine aesthetic in order to emphasise the modernity of these women. These connections follow the complexities discussed in the previous chapter, where the ability of a poster to both follow and question expectations of femininity was discussed.

In his 2010 book, *Writing Underground,* David Welsh argues that a particular style emerged from Underground posters during the 1920s.[70] This aesthetic, which Welsh names 'Tubism', brought together ideas, images, literary and visual genres, and the technology of electric power in a shifting and often contradictory form'.[71] Although Welsh never fully identifies what Tubism is, with its abstract style Fletcher's poster follows many of the tenets he lays out. This is significant because Welsh goes on to argue that 'the power of Tubist imagery and the relationship between modernism and commercial publicity' became evident in contemporary paintings of the Underground such as Walter Sickert's (1860 – 1942) *Queen's Road (Bayswater) Station* (c.1915– 16 The Courtauld) and Gladys Hynes' (1888 – 1958) *Underground* (1920s) (private collection) which took their inspiration from the Tubist style seen in poster art.[72] Such a claim suggests that in some cases poster design may have influenced fine art, with artists drawing on the imagery they saw in Underground stations when producing their paintings.

While there is no direct evidence of Fletcher's poster influencing fine art, Welsh's claims suggest that Fletcher or other women artists, may well have influenced art through

[68] Tag Gronberg, 'Sonia Delaunay: Fashioning the Modern Woman', *Women: A Cultural Review,* 13:3, 2002, 272-288.
[69] Ibid, 275-276.
[70] David Welsh, *Underground Writing: The London Tube from George Gissing to Virginia Woolf*, Liverpool, 2010, 143.
[71] Ibid, 144.
[72] Ibid, 155.

their production of Tubist posters. The opportunity to do this would have been significant to these women because it went against the traditional understanding of women as 'copiers' rather than innovators. Entrenched beliefs around sexual difference and the position of women as 'biological carriers' rather than 'creators' continued to be asserted in reviews and art writing of the twentieth century. For example, in 1900 George Moore claimed that 'woman's nature is more facile and fluent than man's. Women do things more easily, but they do not penetrate below the surface' and therefore 'have created nothing'.[73] Meanwhile in 1910 Arthur Bye declared that 'man's sphere is that of creation … woman's that of preservation and nourishment'.[74] Not only do such claims undermine women's artistic achievements but the strength of such claims may well have discouraged male artists from turning to women's work for inspiration, as doing so risked undermining their own masculinity. It is possible however that male artists may have been influenced by the posters of women artists. Although many were signed, the methods of viewing posters 'on the run' gave poster art a greater level of anonymity than other art forms.[75] It therefore seems reasonable to suggest that such anonymity may have afforded women poster artists greater levels of influence.

In line with this, while Fletcher's influence on fine art remains unconfirmed, it is possible to identify her impact and innovation within poster art. One example is Fletcher's depiction of featureless figures, a form of imagery which would go on to appear in many other works of poster art over the following decades. Such influence is particularly significant because it contradicts the claims of the male poster artist Purvis, who stated in a 1929 lecture that he was the first to remove faces in poster art.[76] The poster Purvis referred to in this lecture was his work *East Coast by LNER* which features a simplified style with large blocks

[73] George Moore, *Modern Painting*, New York, 1900, 226.
[74] Arthur Bye, "Women and the World of Art," *Art and Decoration*, 10, 1910, 87.
[75] Herbert Morgan, 'Art on the Hoardings', *Commercial Art*, September 1924, 115.
[76] Tom Purvis, 'Commercial Art', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 77.3990, 1929, 649-664.

of colour and limited shadow or depth. This poster focuses on four feminine figures clad in fashionable bathing costumes and standing on a small boat which is rowed by a fifth, older, masculine, figure. The image appears to depict a peaceful and warm summer's day at the sea in keeping with the LNER's holiday campaigns. Purvis links his use of featureless faces to this evocation of a sunny day, discussing how this gave the impression

> of brilliant sunlight directed straight on to my group ; and, as you all know, sunlight, if it is so bright that it hurts your eyes to look at it when you come out of a shadowy room, leaves an impression on your mind of broad masses of colour without detail; and in working out my pattern I found I had gradually and logically reduced everything to complete silhouettes in spots of colour and did not need features at all, excepting where they affected the shapes of mass. [77]

Moving on from Purvis' own discussion, the *East Coast* poster has now been widely recognised as the first iteration of the featureless figure design and has led poster scholars, including Ruth Artmonsky and John Hewitt, to praise Purvis' work in articles and monographs.[78] Indeed, Artmonsky described the featureless figure as being 'one of the most readily identifiable markers' of Purvis' style. [79] The existence of Fletcher's poster, which is dated to 1926, raises questions around these claims. While the process of poster production (and the delay between design and printing) makes it impossible to date the creation of either Fletcher or Purvis' posters exactly, Fletcher's poster undermines the significance of Purvis' statement and suggests that the innovation he is often credited with may not have been

[77] Ibid, 659.
[78] John Hewitt, 'East Coast Joys: Tom Purvis', *Journal of Design History,* 8:4, 291-311; Ruth Artmonsky, *Tom Purvis. Art For The Sake of Money*, 2015.
[79] Artmonsky, *Purvis* 44

entirely his own. The only other poster produced (or at least signed) by Fletcher and dated to 1927, also included these featureless figures, making this as much part of Fletcher's style as Purvis'. Despite this, while Purvis' innovation in this is often used as evidence of his artistic importance, Fletcher has generally been overlooked within scholarship on poster art.

The apparent omission of Fletcher from poster history is an example of how perceptions of women artists have been affected by their position in society. A number of male artists including Purvis and McKnight Kauffer travelled around the country during the early twentieth century, delivering lectures on their work in poster art.[80] These talks provided artists with the opportunity to promote their status and establish the story of their art for a wider audience. Not only did this determine their importance amongst their contemporaries, but the subsequent reproduction and preservation of these talks in journals and magazines has continued their legacy into the present day. However, despite their undeniable success in gaining work as poster artists, women do not appear to have been offered equivalent opportunities to talk about their art. Women's ideas were also less likely to have been written down. Despite there being a considerable market for books on poster art and how to produce it during the 1920s and 1930s women were notably absent as authors of these. Again, this left men to establish their perspectives, creating a historiography which unfairly credits success to male artists.

There are a number of reasons why this absence of women may have occurred. It may simply have been a structural issue and a symptom of the lack of women in these meeting spaces. None of the seven individuals who contributed to the discussion after Purvis' talk were women and women's voices were similarly absent following a talk by McKnight Kauffer in 1938. This low female presence is likely to have been reflected in those asked to

[80] Examples of this include a talk by Edward Mcknight Kauffer at the Royal Society of Arts in 1938 recorded in Edward Mcknight Kauffer 'Advertising Art the Designer and the Public', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 87:4488, 1938, 51-70; Purvis's multiple talks can be found in the artists archive which is held at the National Railway Museum Archive, GB 756 1990-7283.

contribute to the events, with male speakers being favoured amongst those organising and attending lectures. More specifically however, female absence is also likely to have been influenced by the deeper social expectations and beliefs about women. The belief that women were not 'creators' in their art (as discussed above) is likely to have rendered their opinions less important than their male colleagues, decreasing demand for their thoughts on this and other subjects.

FREDA LINGSTROM (AGAIN)

In the previous section I demonstrated how women artists used poster art to explore the modernist aesthetic, experimenting with machine inspired imagery and engaging with movements like Vorticism. I also demonstrated how such styles were encouraged by poster commissioners such as London Transport, whose interest in modernist imagery increased the opportunity for women artists to explore these ideas. However, modernist styles were not the only approaches valued in poster art and it was widely agreed that effective poster campaigns required a variety of styles. Such a perspective was put forward by Pick who declared the need for variety, because 'if all posters were Kauffer posters, [in this case a byword for abstract] the attractiveness of them would be lessened'.[81] Beyond modernist imagery one particularly notable approach to poster art was landscape imagery, as a number of artists created posters which celebrated the British countryside.

As in the above examples, this focus on landscapes coincided with a broader development of modern landscape painting in Britain. This contribution was recognised by those discussing the posters. In 1924 critic and writer Walter Sparrow claimed that London Transport had produced 'a series of pure landscapes that helped to add new decorative aims and methods to the traditions of British landscape painting', before stating that many other

[81] Pick quoted in Saler, *Medieval Modernism*, 100.

companies were now following this lead.[82] Sparrow's claim that these posters 'add' to the genre of landscape painting is important.[83] It indicates the artistic significance of the posters and implies that they were recognised for their contributions to the wider art world.

Many artists produced landscape posters during their career. One example of this is the poster *Tintern Valley* by Lingstrom, which was produced for the GWR in 1930 (fig.71). Although printed in a portrait rather than landscape format, this poster features many elements associated with traditional landscape painting and it seems that Lingstrom was trying to mimic the landscape genre when producing this work. Most notable amongst these features are the brushstrokes which can be made out on the image, in particular on the hilltops where orange, green, and purple colours merge together — resembling the layering of oil paint in landscape painting. Other features include the *repoussiour* tree at the front of the image which frames the scene and offers a sense of depth, as well the lake which dominates the bottom of the poster and reflects the scene. All these features are notably different from Lingstrom's *Broads* poster discussed at the beginning of this chapter. They are therefore indications of Lingstrom's adaptability as a poster artist, able to produce art in multiple styles during the same period.

While Lingstrom's poster bears notable similarities to landscape paintings, the artists producing posters in this genre did more than simply replicate imagery seen in fine art. As with those using modernist styles landscape poster artists interacted with, and contributed to, growing debates surrounding the landscape genre during this period. This is significant because the development of rural imagery and landscape painting has since been identified as a notable aspect of the British art world during the 1920s and 1930s and has been discussed by scholars including Kristin Bluemel, Alexandra Harris and Sue Malvern.[84] Although

[82] Sparrow, *Advertising,* 122-123.
[83] Ibid.
[84]Kristin Bluemel, 'Rural Modernity and the Wood Engraving Revival in Interwar England', *Modernist Cultures,* 9.2, 2014, 233–259; Harris, *Romantic Moderns,* 184; Sue Malvern, 'War Tourisms: "Englishness", Art, and the First World War', *Oxford Art Journal*, 24:1, 2001, 45–66.

considering these advancements under various guises, including a focus on Englishness, modern romanticism, or conservative modernity these scholars agree that the interest in landscapes and other natural forms was a direct response to the effects of WW1. They argue that the mass destruction and death of this period (often caused by new inventions such as machine guns) made many wary of modernity in the years following the war. This, combined with widespread economic difficulties and social uncertainty, led people to search for tradition in their art as this offered the illusion of security amidst widespread change.[85] Alison Light summed this move up as a 'Janus-faced' response to modernity, noting that it was both a reaction towards modern changes and a fervent denial of change's existence.[86] Accordingly, the landscapes produced during this period focused on traditional imagery and rural scenes, which were largely free from mechanisation and technology. Modern objects such as roads, streetlamps, and large buildings or factories were almost always omitted, even in topographical scenes, making it appear as if the locations depicted were frozen in time.

The appeal of the landscape genre was furthered by the arguments that landscape art was inherently 'British'. Such a trait was highly valued for its connections to stability and its contrast to 'foreign' values, which were feared following political upheaval in countries such as Germany, Italy, Spain, and Russia. Although discussed throughout this period the connections between landscapes and British values were established firmly by critic Herbert Read in his 1934 article 'English Art' which was published in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs.*[87] Written in response to an exhibition of British art at the Royal Academy, in this article Read argued that 'whatever its content', British art could be distinguished by its focus on 'a detailed observation of nature', seen in the landscape paintings of artists such as Thomas Gainsborough (1727 – 1788).[88] In line with Read's arguments, the focus on

[85] Alex Potts, '"Constable Country" between the Wars', *Patriotism the Making and Unmaking of British National Identity,* Raphael Samuel (ed)*,* London, 1989, 161-186.
[86] Alison Light, *Forever England*, Oxford, 1991, 1-19.
[87] Herbert Read, 'English Art' *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs,* 63:369, December 1933, 242- 270.
[88] Ibid, 269.

landscape painting also increased an interest in emulating art of the past, in which such scenes could be found. The artist Paul Nash discussed this. Nash claimed that contemporary artists were preoccupied with their attempts to follow British artistic history and become 'modern Constables and Cromes', gaining inspiration from artists such as John Constable (1776 – 1837) and John Crome (1768 – 1821).[89]

Lingstrom's poster follows these ideas. The subject matter is traditional and the landscape is free of modern elements such as roads or machinery, meaning that it could be a depiction of Tintern Abbey during any century. Meanwhile, the poster's idealised imagery — the scenery appears to be bathed in a golden light — follows the Romantic style associated with Constable or Cromes' paintings, giving the poster a picturesque appearance. However, through its production as a poster Lingstrom also modernises the landscape genre and therefore adheres to Nash's discussion of 'modern' versions of past artists. By its very nature the poster was a modern object. It was created using modern lithographic printing methods, displayed (mostly) in the growing cities across the country, and associated with advertising, itself a modern phenomenon. Lingstrom's poster and those discussed below can therefore be seen as a means of modernising the landscape genre, contributing to the wider efforts of landscape painters during this time.

CLARE LEIGHTON: DEVELOPING ARTISTIC IDEAS

While Lingstrom's work in poster art constituted the majority of her artistic production during this period, for other artists (such as the part-time or celebrity artists discussed in Chapter One) poster production was an opportunity to expand and develop the work they already were producing in fine art. Clare Leighton was one example of this. Leighton

[89] Paul Nash, *The Listener*, 1933 quoted in Andrew Causey, 'English art and National Character', *The Geographies of Englishness landscape and the national past 1880-1940,* David Peters Corbett, Ysanne Holt and Fiona Russell, (ed), Yale, 2002, 275-302

produced several landscape posters for London Transport and The EMB during the 1920s and 1930s, all of which resembled the rural scenes she was depicting in the wood engravings which dominated her artistic output. In both mediums Leighton worked in a naturalistic style and depicted landscapes which were largely devoid of developing technology, focusing instead on figures participating in manual work and appealing to demands for traditional landscape scenes.

Leighton's first foray into poster art was for the EMB in 1927, by which time she was an established and well-known artist. Focusing on traditional images of British farming, this commission followed the layout of all EMB works. It consisted of five posters: three printed in a landscape format measuring 60 inches x 40 inches, and two printed in portrait measuring 25 inches x 40 inches, as well as a sixth poster or letterpress strip measuring 65 inches x 5 and 3/4 inches. These were displayed horizontally on the EMB's purpose-built hoardings where they were easily recognisable to the British public and likely to have attracted considerable attention. Indeed, Leighton's posters for the EMB were widely praised in the press for their artistic value. The *Manchester Guardian* described them as being 'among the most striking and beautiful' posters produced during this period, while the *Daily Herald* described Leighton as a 'poster genius' for her work.[90]

Although part of the wider EMB campaign, Leighton's poster series had a notably different aim to the other 'British' posters commissioned by the EMB. The majority of the EMB output during its six-year existence can be divided into three separate categories. The first were depictions of the empire as a whole, in which the unity and relationships of its member countries was emphasised. A clear example of this theme were the *March of the Empire* posters produced by Dora Batty and discussed in Chapter One. The second category were posters which depicted Britain (and sometimes the United Kingdom) as a site of

[90] G S S, 'New Poster Genius', *Daily Herald*, 20th August 1929; H. W, 'A Woman's Posters: The British Empire Marketing Board', *The Manchester Guardian,* 17th June 1929, 8.

consumption, in which goods could be bought and sold.[91] Examples of posters in this category include *A Country Grocers Shop* by Taylor in which a housewife is shown buying empire goods to the benefit of other countries. Occasionally, posters in this category also represented Britain as a site of 'secondary production' where raw goods from other countries were transformed into products which could then be bought by residents.[92] Examples of this type of poster include Clive Gardiner's (1891 – 1960) series on British motor factories. Finally, the third and perhaps most notable category, were posters which presented other empire countries as sites of primary production. These include *Gathering Cocoa Pods* by Gerald Spencer Pryse (1882 – 1956), in which a group of women from West Africa can be seen collecting cocoa pods and carrying baskets of these on their heads.

In contrast to these three categories however, Leighton's poster series presented Britain as a site of primary production by focusing on its farming industry. Leighton depicted multiple aspects of the farming process in her EMB campaign, with each poster representing a separate scene of 'ploughing, threshing, lambing-time, milking, and a malt-house'.[93] The EMB's decision to present this perspective was perhaps driven by their desire to show the empire as a united body working together, or as Stephen Constantine describes it, as a 'system of co-operative development bringing mutual benefits'.[94] In presenting this perspective Leighton's poster helped to show Britain as a contributing member of the empire and as one which worked just as hard as its fellow countries to ensure the empire remained strong.

A desire to emphasise the production elements of British farming explains the selection of Leighton for this campaign, despite the fact that she had never produced poster art before. Leighton had considerable knowledge of the British farming industry and co-

[91] Felicity Barnes, 'Bringing Another Empire Alive? The Empire Marketing Board and the Construction of Dominion Identity, 1926–33', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History,* 42:1, 2014, 61-85, 68.
[92] Ibid.
[93] G S S, 'Poster Genius'.
[94] Stephen Constantine, *Buy & Build: The Advertising Posters of the Empire Marketing Board*, London, 1986, 217.

owned a farm with journalist Noel Brailsford. She was therefore able to represent the machinery and labour involved in farming accurately, allowing her to demonstrate the effort British farmers put into their work. It would seem that the EMB valued this knowledge so highly that they were willing to pay Leighton a fee of £250 for her posters.[95] This was an amount the EMB usually reserved for established poster artists such as Newbould, who was already widely known for his achievements in poster design before he worked for the EMB.

Leighton's farming knowledge can be seen in all of the posters she produced for the EMB. In the *Threshing* poster for example, (fig.72) Leighton depicts a specific stage in the harvesting process which took place up and down the country each year. In the poster a group of eight farmers are depicted separating their crops with the help of large farming machinery. These figures are all participating in different activities, indicating Leighton's knowledge of this activity. In an interview with the *Daily Herald,* Leighton noted her sources for this poster as being the farmers she lived alongside.[96] Leighton described how 'when you have lived among the people as I have done poster work of this sort is a genuine pleasure'.[97] She also noted the personal nature of this imagery, claiming that 'one of the threshers in the poster is Old Ted Lawrence a real Dorsetshire character. He has been 'dreshing' for over 70 years. He is now 85 years old, and he attributes his long life to the fact that he has never married'.[98]

Beyond its accurate depiction of farming activities Leighton's poster resembles other artworks she produced during this time. A year before the EMB commission Leighton produced another image of threshing for the American magazine *The Forum* (fig.73). This work, which was produced as a wood block, bares remarkable similarities to the later EMB campaign, despite being produced in a portrait rather than landscape layout. The print focuses

[95] CO 760/26 Publicity Committee Poster Section, 1st December 1926, 13th April 1927, 6th January 1927.
[96] G S S, 'Poster Genius'.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid.

around the same machinery as the poster design and Leighton depicts figures working on both the ground and the machinery itself. Another notable similarity is the inclusion of a figure on the left side of both works, who is shown drinking from a bottle whilst sitting on bales of hay. The transferal of this figure and others suggests that Leighton used the EMB commission to scale up her earlier designs, experimenting with the greater size of the poster and the large audience this commission afforded her.

The same drinking figure appeared again in a third work created by Leighton after the EMB campaign. This time however, the figure appeared sat on the right side of the image. This third work was another larger woodblock print created by Leighton for her own book *The Farmer's Year,* (fig.74) an annotated calendar which recorded 'twelve months on an English farm'.[99] Beyond the other drinking figure this poster shares a number of other similarities of the EMB work, suggesting that this is the third iteration of the same design. This print includes a traction engine at the side of the scene, a piece of machinery which was absent from the *Forum* print but implemented in the EMB poster to frame the image. It is also printed in a landscape format, which follows the required layout of the EMB poster and allows Leighton to depict a larger scene than the *Forum* work.

The similarities between the threshing poster and Leighton's wider artistic output suggest that Leighton viewed her poster commission as an extension of her artistic practice and used it as an opportunity to develop her own artistic ideas. The commission also offered her the opportunity to promote her own ideology to the public. In her thesis on Leighton's art, Caroline Hinckman argues that Leighton was drawn to the landscape genre because its associations with stability appealed to her own personal ideas. Hickman notes that Leighton

[99] Clare Leighton, *The Farmer's Year,* London, 1933.

> freights the heroic images of ploughman, sower, and harvester with historical associations to underscore how indispensably fundamental are their tasks, and how important a means of individual and national revival even as British agriculture remained marginalized under the logic of a world economy[100]

The large audience poster design offered may therefore have been particularly important to Leighton, allowing her to promote her work and her values to a larger audience.

BRYNHILD PARKER: ARTISTIC LEGACY

Leighton was not the only artist to engage with the same styles and subject matter in both her poster art and wider output. Another example of this practice can be seen in the poster *Appledore* produced by Brynhild Parker for Shell Oil in 1932 (fig.75). This poster was part of Shell's wider 'everywhere you go campaign' which aimed to promote the availability of Shell across the country, telling motorists that they could rely on the company's fuel wherever they travelled. In order to represent this message artists such as Parker needed to create a complex image, which both emphasised the remoteness of the area shown, as well as its connections to the modern world (following the belief that Shell could be accessed 'everywhere').

Parker's poster, which focused on a picturesque view of Appledore quay, features all the hallmarks of the landscape genre. The horizon is positioned approximately a third of the way down the image creating a sense of space and depth. In the background green hills and trees can be seen, while in the foreground several small sailing boats lie abandoned on the sandy cove. A group of buildings line the right of the image and these curve to follow the harbour wall. All these buildings are depicted in pink, grey, and yellow and this makes them

[100] Hickman, 'Clare Leighton's Wood Engravings', 88.

appear part of the wider natural space, which is also depicted in these colours. This colour scheme also distances the houses from the new steel and concrete buildings emerging in cities during this period and suggests that the houses have been part of the landscape for many years, making them as much a part of the surroundings as the natural elements.

However, in addition to these features Parker's poster also includes a number of modern elements. The image as a whole is depicted using flattened shapes and dark lines, seen most clearly on the houses which appear along the harbour wall. Such features modernise the landscape and bring its existence to the present day. In addition to this a large steamer ship can be seen at the centre of the poster, disrupting the tranquil scene. This ship acts as an allusion to the tankers which carried Shell Oil across the world during the 1920s and 1930s. It therefore acted as a symbol of the availability of Shell Oil everywhere, following the aims of the campaign.

In addition to promoting the poster's advertising message, Parker's production of a modernised landscape was also in keeping with her wider work. Parker was a member of the East London Group, who were famed for their role in the modern landscape revival. This group painted landscapes in a realist style, featuring a muted colour palette and often no human figures.[101] The pastel tones used in Parker's poster follow the groups use of light shades when depicting spaces away from the capital.[102] Such colours are relatively unusual for poster art, which was typically associated with bright and eye-catching colour schemes and is thus indicative of Parker's transferal of this style. In line with this, *Appledore* resembled specific paintings produced by Parker during this time. The style of the houses and the flattened perspective of the poster all resemble Parker's painting *Harbour* c1930 (fig.76) which although painted from a different perspective, depicts a similar peaceful coastal scene.

[101] David Buckman, 'A Brief History', https://www.eastlondongroup.co.uk, (accessed June 2022); Alan Waltham, 'From Mile End to Mayfair: the East London Group and their contemporaries', *Artuk,* 2nd September 2017, https://artuk.org/discover/stories/from-mile-end-to-mayfair-the-east-london-group-and-their-contemporaries (accessed June 2022)
[102] Ibid.

Meanwhile, the poster's subject matter and its depiction of boats and figures bear obvious similarities with another painting Parker made of the same location, *Quayside Appledore,* which she produced around 1930. Records suggest that this work was exhibited at the exhibition 'New paintings by the East London Group' held at the Alex. Reid & Lefevre gallery in 1932, demonstrating its connection to the East London Group's ideas.[103]

Other artists in the East London group, such as Harold and Walter Steggles (1911 – 1971) (1908 – 1997) and Elwin Hawthorne (1905 – 1954), also created posters for Shell during the 1930s. This suggests that the group's style and approach to landscape painting was valued by the company and considered to tie in with Shell's values (or at least the values they wished to promote). This use of the East London artists becomes even more understandable when considering the further purpose of posters like Parker's. This poster, and those of Steggles and Hawthorne, were part of Shell's wider attempt to re-ingratiate itself with the public, following criticism faced by the company during the later 1920s. Hewitt provides the clearest explanation of this in his article on Shell publicity.[104] Here, Hewitt notes that Shell's advertising policy of the 1930s was created in response to the increased levels of distrust towards the motor car industry. [105] This followed groups such as the Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRA) and the National Society for Checking Abuse of Public Advertising (SCAPA) blaming the industry for destroying the countryside by building new roads, petrol stations, and roadside advertising.[106]

The secretary of CPRA, Harry Peach, believed that poster advertising was particularly responsible for the destruction of the environment.[107] Peach claimed that bright posters or 'vulgar shouting signs' were some of the 'the worst disfigurement of the villages' and

[103] Sales catalogue Woolley & Wallis Modern British & 20th Century Art Sale, 11th December 2019.
[104] John Hewitt, 'The "Nature" and "Art" of Shell Advertising in the Early 1930*s*', *Journal of Design History,* 5:2, 1992, 121–139.
[105] Ibid, 127.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Harry Peach, 'The Advertiser and the Disfigurement of Town and Countryside', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts,* 78:4022, 1929, 144-162.

advocated for 'legislation to prohibit' hoardings on 'pleasant roads'.[108] Peach's complaints formed part of a wider campaign against vulgarity in poster art, an accusation which was levelled towards any poster considered to feature garish or distasteful imagery or considered aesthetically unappealing. Discussed briefly in the previous chapter, in many cases accusations of vulgarity were used as shorthand for an overly commercial poster, in which the poster's purpose as advertising was given greater significance than its aesthetic appeal. This can be seen in Peach's criticism of 'shouting signs', a reference to posters in which typography is prioritised over imagery.

Other critics also associated overly commercial posters with vulgarity. H. St Claire Mason claimed that the word 'vulgar' should be used in reference to a poster that 'offend[s] in colour and composition', is '"sloppy"' in its appearance, or one which focuses on humour.[109] He goes on to suggest that such approaches had a negative effect on the company behind the poster as 'the vulgar and the commonplace will inevitably fail'.[110] In addition to these claims, accusations of vulgarity were related specifically to the use of an advertising expert rather than an artist when producing a poster design. American critic Amelia Defries claimed that 'men of commerce have...had the unpardonable vulgarity to alter the artist's work to suit themselves'.[111] Such a claim suggests that a poster needed to be a work of art in its own right.

Employing notable fine-art artists such as Parker was one way for Shell to follow the demands of groups such as SCAPA and appeal to their middle-class customers, for whom ideas of vulgarity were particularly significant. The artistic appearance of Parker's poster, coupled with its clear connections to her fine art, made it the ideal poster for this, in keeping with the demands of critics such as Mason and Defries. In line with this, Parker's poster is

[108] Ibid, 162.
[109] H. St Claire Mason, 'Why by Vulgar', *Commercial Art*, August 1923, 225.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Amelia Dorothy Defries, 'English Commercial Posters', *The American Magazine of Art,* 10:9, 1919, 342-347, 347.

printed in a manner which emphasises its artistic connections, encouraging an audience to look at it in the same way they would view a painting in a gallery. For example. the image itself is printed within a cream boarder, giving the impression that it appears in a picture frame. Meanwhile, below the image, both the work's title *Quay – Appledore* and Parker's name are printed clearly, as if on a gallery label.

In her book *Romantic Moderns English Writers, Artists and the Imagination from Virginia Woolf to John Piper,* Harris notes a further significance of the Shell posters, arguing that because of the company's embrace of artists and artistic imagery, the works should be considered as part of the wider artistic focus on landscape art.[112] Such a claim is one of the few examples of art history which acknowledges the artistic significance of poster art and its role in contributing to aesthetic changes. Harris notes that the Shell posters 'had a distinctive and coherent modern look'. She describes how Vanessa Bell's *Alfriston* poster (Fig.17) 'was bright and lucid, emptied of quaintness', while Cyril and Rosemary Ellis' made 'the dusty art of the antiquary… colourful and family-friendly'.[113] Such claims therefore support my own ideas laid out in this chapter, demonstrating that the posters were not simply copies of landscape painting but were artworks which developed and contributed to the changing artistic culture of twentieth-century Britain.

Following on from Harris's arguments, it would appear that in some instances posters — in particular landscape posters — usurped the role of paintings in British society. By the 1920s many people were buying posters to display on walls in their homes, using this as an alternative to investing in more expensive paintings. These sales of poster art were discussed in Chapter Two, where I noted that for many women artists the potential of selling posters increased the appeal of the medium. However, what was not noted in this chapter, is that these sales may have been as much a necessity as a desire. The number of individuals

[112] Harris, *Romantic Moderns*, 184.
[113] Ibid.

purchasing paintings were falling rapidly during this period as economic uncertainty and changing values damaged the art market. Sparrow considered this in his book *Advertising and British Art*. He stated that there were a number of reasons for the drop in painting sales.

> Easel-picture, oils, and water-colours are going out of vogue, their purchasers become fewer year after year; a great many painters are as lonely among their productions as hand-loom weavers became after power-looms had defeated them. This great decline in the sales of new pictures began during the 'nineties, when "society" and the middle classes began to be bored by too many miscellaneous exhibitions. The supply of paintings frames in gilt far exceeded the demand for them… add to these matters the motor-car, with its many expenses and its enjoyments; it gave to the well-to-do a new hobby that necessitated economy in one of their old amusements, such as picture buying.[114]

Sparrow also notes that, in addition to this malaise, the economic climate prevented many from purchasing art. He claims

> To-day we are gamblers all, struggling to live under a colossal burden of debt which has crushed us from free citizens to floundering taxpayers. Only a person here and there can afford to buy new paintings. [115]

Sparrow concludes that one solution to the declining art market was for the public to purchase the much cheaper poster art, displaying this in the way they would have previously

[114] Sparrow, *Advertising*, 122-123.
[115] Ibid, 124.

shown paintings. Landscape poster art may therefore have held a particular value during the early twentieth century and may have come to exist alongside painting in many people's minds.

Perhaps in recognition of its increasing dominance on the art market a number of critics noted the landscape poster's value. In 1934, two years after Parker's poster, Clive Bell declared that the Shell posters were 'the most interesting movement in contemporary British art' and that as a result the company 'is likely to do more for English art in a dozen years than the Royal Academy has done in a hundred'.[116] In a similar vein the critic Cyril Connolly termed the Shell commissioning board 'the new Medici' in 1934 'with Mr Beddington whose judgement it represents as Lorenzo'.[117] This claim, which compares the Shell board to the Medici family of Florence, suggests that Connolly believed the posters of Shell could continue to hold artistic significance in the future. Given these ideas it would seem that we should understand Parker's *Appledore* as part of her wider artistic oeuvre and not as a separate unconnected work.

Art Galleries of The Public

Until recently discussions of artistic development in twentieth-century Britain have revolved around male artists, who have been credited with many of the innovations and achievements of the period. Stemming from the dominance of men in artistic spheres, such a perspective perpetuates a well-worn narrative that male artists created art and women artists (when they existed at all) merely copied existing work. In some ways this may have been true. In her recent book on women artists Maria Quirk discussed the need for women to work in popular or accepted styles if they wanted to gain artistic success, a requirement which reduced their

[116] Clive Bell, 'Shell Mex and the Painters', *The New Statesman and Nation*, 23rd June 1934, 946.
[117] Cyril Connolly, 'The New Medici', *The Architectural Review,* 76:452, July 1934, 2-4.

opportunities to innovate.[118] Meanwhile, other scholars such as Peppin, have noted that often women artists were left out or ostracised from artistic movements, preventing them from having a significant (or at least traceable) impact.[119] In this chapter, I have attempted to refute these claims. By focusing on poster art produced by women I have suggested that women artists did produce innovative and stylistic work during the twentieth century, but not in the fine-art mediums we traditionally focus on.

This chapter has demonstrated a number of ways in which women poster artists contributed to artistic developments in both poster art and fine art. Firstly, I have demonstrated the innovations these women made in poster design. In some cases, such as Stenning's use of the above/below design, these have been overlooked by scholarship and their significance has gone unrecognised. In other cases, they have been actively dismissed by scholarship and instead attributed to male artists. For example, Lingstrom's introduction of new modernist designs to the LNER has been almost entirely overlooked by more recent poster history, which instead attributes these to the male artists signed by the company three years later. Meanwhile, Fletcher's depiction of faceless figures has been entirely omitted from writing, with Purvis instead gaining sole credit for such innovation.

This chapter has also demonstrated how women used the poster as an opportunity to engage with fine-art movements. In some of these cases the artists, such as Andrews, actively benefited from the poster's reputation as an innovative medium which encouraged experimentation. In other cases, these developments coincided with an artist's work in fine art, with an artist using the same themes or styles in both mediums. The most notable example of this is Leighton's EMB campaign, in which the artist focused on the same ideas and themes she was exploring in her wider artistic practice. This can also be seen in Parker's work for Shell Oil, where artistic connections may have led to Parker being commissioned in

[118] Quirk, *Women, Art and Money,* 98.
[119] Peppin, 'Women That a Movement Forgot'.

the first place. In all of these cases it seems undeniable that these works had a wider impact on visual culture, shaping both what the public viewed as art and the styles and approaches artists used.

CONCLUSION: A UNIQUE PERIOD OF ARTISTIC OPPORTUNITY

On the 3rd September 1939 Britain declared war on Nazi Germany, launching its citizens into their second world war in twenty-five years. Almost overnight the lifestyles of the British public were irredeemably transformed, as places of entertainment closed, and group activities were discouraged.[1] The poster art movement also came to an abrupt end. Encouragements of mass-consumption became unpalatable within the new climate of rationing and conservation. As a result, posters advertising products or tourist activities rapidly disappeared from view. At the same time printing presses across the country were taken over as part of the war effort.[2] Meanwhile poster hoardings at railway stations and roadsides were donated to war-focused publicity, which instructed the public on war work, air raid procedures, and new salvaging strategies.[3]

With its focus on aesthetically appealing imagery the poster art discussed in this thesis became less popular as the war effort wore on. Instead, graphic, typographically-focused posters came to dominate the hoardings, with adverts focusing on slogans and memorable cartoon-style images over artistically inspired designs. Examples of these include the salvage poster *The Great Round Up,* (fig.77) in which a cartoon was used to encourage members of the public to sort their rubbish carefully before throwing it away. Also, the poster *Beware* (fig.78) in which bold typography was combined with a caricature of Adolf Hitler in order to warn people against careless talk. Photographic advertising also grew in popularity during this period, as new technology made it easier to collage photographs together with text. One

[1] The discouragement of mass gatherings was widely discussed during this period see for example: Anon. 'When is it New Year', *Arbroath Herald*, 20th December 1940, 5; Anon. 'The Mass Choir' *Daily Gazette for Middlesbrough,* 19th September 1940, n/p; Anon., 'No Ban on Social Gatherings' *Sevenoaks Chronicle and Kentish Advertiser*, 2nd February 1940, 10.
[2] Anon., 'Printing of Posters', *Liverpool Journal of Commerce*, 29th June 1940, 4.
[3] Anon., 'Front of the House Posters', *Kinematograph Weekly*, 12th September 1940, 5; Pamela Wynne 'Stop the War Posters', *Hastings and St Leonards Observer*, 11th May 1940, 6.

example of this was the poster *Civil Nursing Reserve* (fig.79) in which a photograph of a feminine figure was combined with typography to encourage women to enter the nursing auxiliaries.

As demand for new styles of poster art grew the demand for the artistic poster artists of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s dissipated. Many of the artists discussed in this thesis (both male and female) began to be replaced by other, often younger, artists who specialised in this new style of advertising art. Even after WW2 demands for this new graphic advertising continued with limited calls for the artistic advertising of the past. As a result, few (if any) of the artists discussed in this thesis regained the artistic success they had held before 1939, as the era of the artistic poster was replaced with that of the advertising poster.

Although a number of women artists, such as Grace Golden and Doritt Dekk (1917 – 2014), were part of the new group of poster designers coming to prominence after 1939, the number of women working in this industry fell following this period and female involvement was no longer as exceptional as it once was. It is not clear why this occurred. One explanation may be that women were able to gain work in other areas of artistic production following the conflict, making poster art less appealing in the new post-war world. In evidence of this, a number of women poster artists gained work as official war artists during the conflict perhaps indicating a change in social attitudes towards women's art. For example, Doris Zinkeisen worked as an official war artist throughout the conflict and was one of three artists to depict the liberation of the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in 1945. Similarly, Ethel Gabain documented the efforts of the Women's Voluntary Services traveling around Britain to depict their work in lithographs.[4]

Regardless of what the reasons were for the fall in women's involvement in poster art, the fact remains that the years between 1900 and 1939 were a unique era of female activity in

[4] The works of both Doris Zinkeisen and Gabain are held at the imperial War Museum.

poster art, during which women achieved unprecedented levels of artistic and professional success. Researching this period therefore offers a means of looking at women's artistic production when it takes place in an environment less constrained by patriarchal limitations. Despite this, until this thesis, the phenomenon of women's poster art has never been adequately researched or analysed. In fact, in many cases, women artists have effectively been written out of poster art history, and their achievements ignored in favour of their male contemporaries. Over the course of this thesis I have rectified this, increasing knowledge and understanding of the careers and output of these women and demonstrating the ways in which their poster art impacted on and interacted with the wider art world.

IDENTIFYING WOMEN ARTISTS

One of the most notable achievements of this thesis is the identification of 258 women involved in the creation of artistic posters between 1900 and 1939. Some of these names, such as Herry Perry, have previously been discussed within poster art history (although not to the extent that their achievements deserve), while others such as Audrey Weber, have barely been referenced at all. The names of each of these women can be found in Appendix One where they are listed alongside crucial biographical information such as birth and death dates, education, and addresses. This appendix underpins the analytical and discursive content which runs throughout this thesis and provides the foundations upon which I have constructed my arguments. I hope that it will also enable further research into the women listed, making it possible to move poster scholarship beyond a focus on the same male artists.

As a dataset the information recorded in Appendix One is the first of its kind to be produced in relation to poster art. Until this thesis, poster scholarship has been devoid of any real attempt to catalogue or identify a complete list of the poster artists working in Britain, with the names of many male and female artists remaining unknown. This has come about as

a result of the types of scholarship produced, much of which has focused on single collections of poster art (both public and private) or single campaigns. As I noted in the Introduction to this thesis, this focus has led to individual poster artists being heralded as remarkable or unusual examples of success while the wider industry they were working within has been ignored.

Unfortunately, as a result of this scholarly focus, no equivalent source to Appendix One exists in relation to male artists. This absence of data means that it is not possible to compare my information on women artists with the numbers of men involved in the poster industry or their lifestyles. Nevertheless, my data set remains important. It offers a valuable insight into the world of poster art, at least from a female perspective, and reveals the type of artist able to get work in this industry. Moreover, in compiling Appendix One I have revealed the potential of producing such a list and the benefits of doing so. I hope that this will encourage the expansion of poster scholarship to produce similar data on male artists.

Understanding the World of Women's Poster Art

Factual information runs throughout this thesis and has allowed me to provide a much-needed insight into the world of women's poster art. I have used meeting minutes and artists papers to draw new conclusions around women's participation in the industry, offering insight into how they were commissioned and how commissioners responded to their work. In examining these sources this thesis has overturned many of the false narratives surrounding women's poster production which have been perpetuated in scholarship for many years. Most notably, I have demonstrated that women's employment in this field was not simply attributable to their ability to appeal to female consumers but was instead the result of a series of factors (growing numbers of women artists, women's interest in poster art, the ability to produce the poster in the home) which combined to make the industry more open to women.

Another notable finding of my analysis of these sources is the fact that most women received the same rate of payment as their male contemporaries for their work in poster art. Such an insight is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it signifies a difference between the industry of poster art and many of the other fields of work available to women during the early twentieth century, where women rarely received the same pay as men. Secondly, it provides insight into the value placed on women's work in the poster industry and suggests that their poster art was considered to be the same standard as that produced by male artists. Finally, records of equal pay indicate that many women deliberately entered into poster art in order to take advantage of the benefits the industry offered. This transforms our understanding of the poster from that of a lesser art form— entered into because an artist had failed to gain success in another field — to one of artistic and economic appeal — deliberately chosen by an artist over other arenas.

THE POSTERS' ARTISTIC IMPACT

Throughout this thesis I argue that the poster held influence over the wider art world and offered its artists the opportunity to contribute to artistic developments taking place during this time. I explore the ways women used poster art to develop modernist movements such as vorticism or the production of modern landscape painting and highlight the names of a number of artists (Vanessa Bell, Laura Knight, Clare Leighton) who combined poster work with a career in fine art. Such an analysis alters traditional perspectives on the poster as 'parasitic' of other art forms and instead reveals that, during the early twentieth century, the poster held significant influence over British art and visual culture. My arguments on this also alter conventional views of women artists as isolated or unusual achievers working on the peripheries of the art world. Instead, they suggest that poster art permitted women to

participate in the development of artistic practices and styles, allowing them to influence art and gain recognition for their work.

By considering the posters discussed in this thesis as a significant and important form of artistic production I provide new ways to understand women's art. Current approaches of thinking about the poster— as separate from other art forms and as the subject of non-scholarly texts — have prevented us from recognising the posters' value and have limited our understanding of women's artistic production. However, taking a more scholarly approach to the poster, in the manner done in this thesis, can rectify these issues and return the posters and their artists to the status they held during the early twentieth century, when the works were considered 'some of the outstanding artwork[s] of our time'.[5]

Concluding Remarks

The success of the 2017 – 2018 *Poster Girls* exhibition at the London Transport Museum revealed the considerable public interest in women's poster art. Discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the exhibition demonstrated the appetite for both viewing and learning about the works of these artists, as well as the sheer number of posters which fall into the category of 'women's poster art'. However, at the same time, the exhibition's name and the limited information it provided on the artists or artworks exhibited was representative of the lack of knowledge which exists on this subject and the low expectations for scholarship in this area. In this thesis I have rectified this, offering valuable insight into the careers of the women involved in this industry, the factors which allowed them to gain success, and the ideological and artistic significance of their poster art.

In uncovering this information, I have not only revealed the long-overdue need for scholarship into the subject of women poster artists, but I have also revealed the significant

[5] Sydney R Jones, *Posters and their Designers*, London, 1924, 3.

impact this scholarship can have on wider understandings of women's art. Because the world of poster art functioned with fewer limitations on female artists than other artistic industries it offers a valuable field for research. Looking into female poster art thus helps to end residual claims that women were not as skilled or creatively innovative as men, instead revealing that if they had the necessary conditions women could garner as significant success. In addition to this, researching women's poster art reveals the multiple instances of women's engagement with modern art and artistic practice in Britain. Thus, fundamentally altering our understanding of the work and working practices of women artists during this era.

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WOMEN ARTISTS AND THE BRITISH POSTER MOVEMENT (1900 – 1939)

BY

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A thesis submitted to the University of Birmingham for the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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School of Languages, Cultures, Art History and Music

College of Arts and Law

University of Birmingham

December 2022

Volume 2 of 2

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APPENDIX ONE

The tables in this appendix list the names of every female poster artist I have identified over the course of this research and provide key details on their lives and careers in poster art.

Table One: Biographic Details

Name	Dates	Artistic Education	Marriage	Studio/ address
Adeline Hone		Leeds College of Art		
Agnes Duguid		International Correspondence Schools		
Agnes Gower	1899 - unknown	Central School		
Agnes Miller Parker	1895 - 1980	Glasgow School of art	M - 1918 William McCance, painter	
Agnes Richardson	1885 - 1951			Hawkespoint, Lelant Cornwall
Alex Tweedie	1862 - 1940			Flat in Devonshire house (London)
Alexis McAndrew				
Alice Fanner				
Alice Farmer				Chelsea London
Aline Dugard		Nottingham School of Art		
Alison McKenzie				Glasgow
Alma Faulkner	1886 - 1968	Brighton Municipal School of Art (1912)		4 Albert Mansions, Battersea
Althea Willoughby	1904 -1982	Royal College of Art		
Amy Ayres		Hove Wick Studio		
Ann Bowden				Eccleston Studios, 49 Hugh Street
Ann Dallas				
Ann Fisher				
Ann Philipson				

Anna Zinkeisen	1901 - 1976	Royal Academy	M - Guy Heseltine	8 St Andrews Place
Anne Gilchrist		Grosvenor School of Art		
Annie Fletcher	1869 - 1942	Slade		Harrow on the Hill Middlesex
Annie Pressland	1862 - 1933	Slade		
Antonia Yeoman	1907 - 1970	Royal Academy	M - John Yeoman, Mayor of Chelsea, and Secretary of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England	Cheyne Walk Chelsea
Arnrid-Banniza Johnston	1895 - 1972	Slade		12 Trafalgar Studios
Arrabella				
Audrey Stevens				
Audrey Weber	1891 - 1950	Hornsey School of Art, Royal Academy schools (1922)		3A the Avenue Studios 76 Fulham Road; 37 Queens Gate London
Barbara Beaumont		Brighton Municipal School of art		
Barbara Stubbs		Royal College of Art		
Bertha Olyett				The Black and White Studios 12-13 Bedford Streets Strand
Betty Batchelor		Chelsea School of Art		
Betty Beaumont		Wick Studio Hove		
Betty Cooke	1907 - 1982			
Betty Pinney				
Betty Ritchie				
Betty Swanwick	1915 - 1989	Central School		
Betty Ward				
Bip Pares	1904 - 1977	Slade	M - 1933 Alfred Trevor Gwyn Thomas, doctor. M - 1938 Robert Christopher Bradby publisher assistant	20 Frognal Lane, Hamstead

Blanch Osborn		Battersea Polytechnic		
Blanche Wooler		Liverpool School of Art		
Bridget Workman				
Brynhild Parker	1907 - 1987	Slade		
Caroline Watts	1868 - unknown			
Catherine Alexander	1904 - 2004	Slade	M - 1929 Noel Carrington, Book designer	
Catherine Courtauld	1878 - 1972			
Cathleen Sabine Mann	1896 - 1959	Slade	M -1926 Francis Douglas, 11th Marquess of Queensberry	67 Tufton Street Westminster
Cecilia Murphy		Liverpool School of Art		
Chloe Preston				
Christina Forsyth		Edinburgh College of Art		
Christina Walshe				6 Coheren Road
Christine Jackson				
Clare Leighton	1898 - 1989	Slade and Central	1928-1939 met and lived with Radical Journalist H N Brailsford	27 Belsize Square NW
Clarence Pennington		Widnes Municipal Technical college		
Clodagh Sparrow,	1905 - 1957			21 Royal Crescent London
Constance Castle		Chelsea School of Art	M - J. C Betts	
Constance Irving	1878 - unknown		M - William Noel Irving	32 Holland Park
D Bullock		King Edward VII school of Art, Newcastle		
Daphne Barry	1906 - unknown	Battersea Polytechnic	Harold Blogg	18 Prince of Wales Mansions Battersea

Dolly Tree	1899 - 1962		M - 1931 Thomas Kimes American Naval Officer M - 1942 Don E. Whiteford	
Dora Batty	1891 - 1966	Central School		1 Albert Studios /4 Albert Mansions, Battersea
Dora Coates				
Dora McLaren		Croydon School of Art		55 Great Ormond Street
Doris Gully		Battersea Polytechnic		
Doris Hatt				
Doris Zinkeisen	1898 - 1991	Royal Academy	M - 1927, Edward Grahame Johnstone, naval officer	6 Chester Terrace
Dorothea Sharp	1874 - 1955	Paris art School and Richmond Art School		22 Blomfield Road Maida Vale W9
Dorothee George				
Dorothy Bedford	1897 - unknown	Central School		20 the Common East
Dorothy Braddell	1889 - 1981	Byam Shaw School	M -1914 Darcy Braddell, architect	5 Holland Park Avenue; 63 Princes Square, London; Bury Manor Petworth, Sussex, England
Dorothy Burroughes	1884 - 1963	Slade		Maresfield Road, Hamstead London
Dorothy Hudson	1883 - 1935	Hove Wick Studio		6 Denmark Villas
Dorothy Hutton	1889 - 1984	Central School		Three Shields, 8 Holland Street Kensington
Dorothy Legg			M - 1921 George Dix	56, The Pavement, Penge, Kent
Dorothy Mullock				
Dorothy Newsome		Birmingham School of Art	M - Glenn	32 Holyhead Road Coventry
Dorothy Paton				35 Petits Lane Romford Essex
Dorothy Wheeler	1891 - 1966	Perth Commercial school		

Dulcie Corner		Bournemouth School of Art		
E Marks				
Edith Barclay		Liverpool School of Art		
Edith Kemp Welch				
Edna Clarke Hall	1879 - 1979	Slade	M - 1898 William Clarke Hall, Barrister	Harold Wood Essex
Edna Oakden		Manchester Municipal School of Art		
Edna Rose		Liverpool School of Art		
Eileen Mayo	1906 - 1994	Slade, Central School	M -1936 Dr Richard Gainsborough, founder of art news and reviews	
Eileen Seyd	1908 - 1976	Central School	M - Jeafferson	
Elaine Haxton				
Elizabeth Holman				
Elizabeth Montgomery				
Ella Coates	1889 - 1937		M- Arthur Banks	
Elsie Henderson	1880 - 1967	Slade and Central School	M - 1928 Henri Baron de Codenhove	170 Holland Park Avenue; 27 Old Bond Street London W
Emily Ford				
Emily Harding Andrews				
Enid Koelle				
Enid-Gwunedd Stokoe		Croydon School of Art	M - 1935 Eric Claxton	
Esmé Roberts				
Ethel Everett				
Ethel Gabain	1883 - 1950	Slade, Central School	M - 1913 John Copley, artist	10 Hamstead Square
Eva Savory	1882 - 1938			Sandgates Chertsey
Eve Kirk	1900 - 1969	Slade		Harlow Essex

Faith Gaskell		Battersea Polytechnic		
Fanny Moody	1861 - 1948		M - Gilbert King	
Florence Lundborg		Whistler Academy Paris		
Fran Sutton	1912 - unknown			
Frances Bennett				
Frances Halsted		Redhill Technical Institute		
Freda Beard	1897 - 1984	Central		23 Nevern place Kensington W.8
Freda Levene		Liverpool School of Art		
Freda Lingstrom	1893 - 1989	Central School	Lost fiancé in WW1	69 Belsize Park
Frederica Graham		Central School		
Frieda Harris	1877 - 1962			
G M Dickinson		LCC Hammersmith School of Art		
Gladys Barraclough	1885 - 1972	Chelmsford School of Art	M - James Barraclough, artist	27 Carlyle Square
Gladys Letcher				
Gladys Meyer				
Gladys Peto	1890 - 1977	London School of Art	M - C L Emmerson, colonel	
Gladys Rees		Chelsea School of art	M - Teesdale	42 West Hill Road SW18
Grace Golden	1902 - 1993	Chelsea College of Art and Royal College of Art		1 Mornington Crescent
Gwen Raverat	1885 - 1957	Slade and Central School	M - Jacques Raverat, artist	
Gwynedd Hudson	1881 - 1932	Brighton Municipal School of art and Hove Wick Studio		6 Denmark Villas
Helen Bryce	1891 - 1971			Little Cocklands, Witney Oxfordshire

Helen Ferguson				
Helen Marshall	1897 - unknown			Shared studio Cheyne Walk with Audrey Weber
Helen Mckie	1889 - 1957	Lambeth School of Art		8 The Pheasantry, Kings Road Chelsea SW3; 8 Jubilee Place, Chelsea
Helen Willows		Manchester School of Art		
Herry Perry	1897 - 1962	Central School		Elstree Hertfordshire
Hilda Austin				
Hilda Cowham	1873 - 1964	Royal College of Art	M - Edgar Lander, artist	92 Clifton Hill N. W
Hilda Dallas	1878 - 1958			
Hilda Lancaster		Loughborough College School of Art		
Hope Joseph				
I Jephson		Central School		
Irene Fawkes	1886 - 1977	Chelmsford School of Art		27 Carlyle Square/ 1 Albert Studios
Irene Hawkins				
Ivy Norman		Nottingham School of Art		
Jessica Walters				
Joan Drew				
Joan Horton				20 South Hill Park Gardens NW 3
Joan Hoyle				86 Oakfield Road, Canon Hill Birmingham
Joan Munroe				
Joy Williams		Royal College of Art	M - Ifor Thomas, photographer	
Joyce Dennys				
Kate Burrell				
Kate Jacob(s)				
Katherine Cox				11 Pemberley Avenue, Bedford

Katherine Pearce				196 Cromwell Road Kensington SW 5
Katherine Ritchie				
Kathleen Arden		Sheffield Technical School		142 Gower Street W.C
Kathleen Davy				
Kathleen Lawrence		Croydon School of Art		
Kathleen Nixon	1895 - 1988	Birmingham School of Art		32 Holyhead Road Coventry
Kathleen Stenning				13 Portland Road Holland Park London
Katie McDonald		Central School		
Laura Knight	1877 - 1970	Nottingham School of Art	M- 1903 Harold Knight, artist	16 Langford place st Johns Wood; 25 Woronsow road
Lesley Blanch				
Lili Réthi	1894 - 1969	Art School for Women and Girls (Kunstschule für Frauen und Mädchen) in Vienna,		
Lilian Dring	1908 - 1998	Royal College of Art	M - Cyril J Dring, artist	4 Cavendish Avenue, New Malden, Surrey; 34 Hampton Road, Twickenham, Middlesex, England
Lilian Swanwick		Self-Taught	M -1907 Harold Swanwick, painter	
Lillian Hocknell	1891 - 1977	Leeds Art School		7 Chelsea Manor Studios
Lily Gerrard		Ipswich School of Art		
Louise Jacobs				
Lucy Kemp Welch				
M Bartels				
M Palmer		Liverpool School of Art		

M.O Lilley		Battersea Polytechnic		
Mabel Attwell	1879 - 1964	St Martins	M - 1908 Harold Earnshaw, artist and illustrator	Rowland Gardens London
Mabel Deamer	1872 - 1915		M - Percy Deamer	
Mabel Geer				St Olaves Manor Road Babbacombe Devon
Mabel Rundle				
Mabel Spink				
Maeve Wolf				The Poult House, Pitts wood Tonbridge Kent
Marcia Foster	1897 - 1985	Central School		43 Boundary Road, London
Margaret Barnard	1898 - 1992	Grosvenor School of Art	M - 1924 Robert George Sang Mackechnie, artist	4 Watchbell Street Rye, Sussex
Margaret Bradley		Kent College for Girls	M - 1939 Henry Smallwood, Lt Col Claver	92 Ter Boulevard Pereire Paris
Margaret Calkin James	1895 - 1985	Central School	M -1922 Charles Holloway James, architect	Hornbeams Winnington Road London
Margaret Cawood				Arden Cornwall Road Harrogate
Margaret Clarke	1884 - 1961	National College of Art and Design (Dublin)	M - 1914 Harry Clarke, artist	
Margaret Growing				Belswains, New Dover Road, Kent
Margaret Haythorne	1893 - unknown	Central School		Liverpool
Margaret Hincklieff		Nottingham School of Art		
Margaret Horder	1903 - 1978	Westminster Art School		
Margaret Reynolds		Battersea Polytechnic	M - Thomas Reynolds	
Margaret Smith				Bodifyr Walton Aylesbury
Margaret Stuart				
Margaret Tubby				34 Torrington Park, North Finchley

Marguerite Doring	1894 - 1977			Sally Lun (tea room) Rottingdean Brighton
Marie Kale		Rochdale School of Art		
Marie Stocquart				Scotland
Marjorie Chatterton		Sheffield College of Arts and Crafts		
Marjorie Kershaw		Liverpool School of Art		
Marjorie Willmott-Robinson		Sheffield School of Art		
Mary Adshead	1904 - 1995	Slade	M - 1929 Stephen Bone, artist	1 Chester Gate Regents Park
Mary Caine		Nottingham School of Art		
Mary Dawson		Keighley School of Art		
Mary Florence	1857 - 1954			
Mary Hughes		St Martins		
Mary Kessell	1914 - 1977	Central School	M - Tom Eckersley, poster artist	Ornan Court Ornan Road, Hampstead, London
Mary Koop	1884 - 1967	London School of Art	M - Charles Koop, artist and actor	13 Stanwick Road West Kensington; 'Rill Mead', Highdown Way Sussex
Mary Lowndes	1857 - 1929			
Mary Wingfield				The Castle, Tiverton, Devon
Mary Wright		Central School		
Maud Klein		Central School		72 Carlton Hill, London
Maude Earl				Bloomfield Place
May Bilbie		Nottingham School of Art		
Mela Koehler	1885 - 1960			
Mildred Rogers				
Minnie Mcleish	1917 - unknown			32 Holland Park
Miss Aubele				
Miss Bonnett				

Miss Hammond		Central School		
Miss Woillaid				
Monica Rawlins	1903 - 1990	Central School		115 Ebury street
Muriel Dawson	1897 - unknown			10a High Street Totnes Devon
Muriel Harris				
Muriel Jackson	1901 - 1977	Central School	M- 1928 Francis Courtenay Mason	6 Finchley place; 15 Cannon Place Hamstead
Nancy Price	1880 - 1970			
Nancy Smith	1881 - 1962			Grovesnor Road
Nina Nidermieller				
Nita Worth		Bournemouth School of Art		6 Albert Road Bournemouth
Nora Patterson				
Norah State		Manchester School of art		
Nowell Edwards	1907 - 1983	Royal College of Art	M - Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury	The vicarage Crossens Village Southport; 10 Auriol Road Fulham; 8 Meadow Road Lambeth Kennington
Olive Harris		Royal College of Art	M - 1901 Percy Harris, MP	
Olive-Grace Bourne	1897 - unknown	Croydon School of art and Royal Academy		44 Darnley Road Norwood, London
Pamela Colman Smith	1878 - 1951	Pratt Institute Brooklyn		
Pamela Drew	1910 - 1989	Grosvenor School of Art	M - Baron Rathdonnell	
Pauline Legard				27 Bolton Studios
Peggy Smith				
Phyllis Bray	1911 - 1991	Slade	M - John Cooper, artist, M- Eric Phillips	
Phyllis Burkinshaw				
Phyllis Dunlop		Leeds College of Art		

Rhoda Dawson	1897 - 1992	Studied under Walter Sickert	M - Bickerdike	Staithe House, The Mall Chiswick
Rona Raymond		Hastings School of Art		
Rosamond Curtis		Slade		
Rosemary Ellis			M - 1931 Clifford Ellis, poster artist	
Ruby Lindsay	1885 - 1919	National Gallery of Victoria School.	M - 1909 Will Dyson, cartoonist	
Ruth Bryant				
Ruth Collingridge				The Cottage Brentwood Essex
Ruth Hutchings				
Ruth Sandys	1887 - unknown			5 Hogarth Road
Sheila Hague				
Stella Ogle		Leeds College of Art		
Stella Steyn	1907 - 1987	Metropolitan School of Art, Dublin	M - 1938 David Ross, French professor	
Sybil Andrews	1898 - 1992	Heatherley School of Fine Art also Grosvenor School	M - 1943	2 Brook Green Studios Dunsany Road
Sybil Tawse	1886 - 1971	Royal College of Art		19 Gloucester Road, S Kensington, London; 44 Cheyne Walk Chelsea
Trekkie Ritchie	1902 - 1995	Slade	M - 1926 Peter Brooker, artist M - 1934 Ian Parsons, editor at Chatto & Windus	
Ursula Gittins				
V M Macdonald				
Vanessa Bell	1879 - 1961	Royal Academy	M - 1907 Clive Bell, writer	
Vera Ross		Slade		
Vera Willoughby	1873 - 1939	Slade	M - 1905 Louis Willoughby, actor	The Church House Slindon Arundel Sussex

Verna Camidge-Stead		Keighley School of Art		
Violet Guy				
Violet Holdsworth				Chelsea London
Violet Robson		Battersea Polytechnic		
Wilma Hickson				
Winifred Forgan		Central School		
Winifred Ward			M - Edgar Ward, photographer	

Table Two: Employment (part one of two)

Note: where X is used this is a confirmed commission, where * is used a commission was discussed or proposed but there is no evidence that payment was given for the work

Name	London Transport	LCC	Shell Mex Oil	LNER	GWR	LMS	SR	EMB
Adeline Hone								
Agnes Duguid								
Agnes Gower	x	x						
Agnes Miller Parker	x							
Agnes Richardson	x							*
Alex Tweedie	x							
Alexis Mcandrew								x
Alice Fanner								
Alice Farmer	x							
Aline Dugard								
Alison McKenzie				x				
Alma Faulkner	x							
Althea Willoughby	x						x	
Amy Ayres								
Ann Bowden	x							
Ann Dallas	x							
Ann Fisher								
Ann Philipson								
Anna Zinkeisen	x			x				
Anne Gilchrist								
Annie Fletcher	x							
Annie Pressland	x							

Antonia Yeoman								
Arnrid-Banniza Johnston	x							*
Arrabella								
Audrey Stevens	x							
Audrey Weber							x	
Barbara Beaumont								
Barbara Stubbs								
Bertha Olyett								
Betty Batchelor								
Betty Beaumont								
Betty Cooke	x							
Betty Pinney	x							
Betty Ritchie				x				
Betty Swanwick	x							
Betty Ward	x							
Bip Pares	x							
Blanch Osborn								
Blanche Wooler								
Bridget Workman								
Brynhild Parker			x					
Caroline Watts								
Catherine Alexander	x							
Catherine Courtauld								
Cathleen Sabine Mann	x		x					
Cecilia Murphy								
Chloe Preston								
Christina Forsyth								
Christina Walshe								
Christine Jackson	x							
Clare Leighton	x							x
Clarence Pennington								
Clodagh Sparrow,	x			x	x	x		
Constance Castle		x						
Constance Irving								
D Bullock								
Daphne Barry	x			x				
Dolly Tree								
Dora Batty	x				x			x
Dora Coates								
Dora McLaren	x							
Doris Gully								

Doris Hatt								
Doris Zinkeisen	x			x				
Dorothea Sharp				x				
Dorothee George					x			
Dorothy Bedford		x						
Dorothy Braddell			x					
Dorothy Burroughes	x							
Dorothy Hudson								
Dorothy Hutton	x							
Dorothy Legg	x							
Dorothy Mullock	x							
Dorothy Newsome								
Dorothy Paton	x							*
Dorothy Wheeler								
Dulcie Corner								
E Marks	x							
Edith Barclay								
Edith Kemp Welch								
Edna Clarke Hall	x		x					
Edna Oakden								
Edna Rose								
Eileen Mayo								
Eileen Seyd								
Elaine Haxton								
Elizabeth Holman			x					
Elizabeth Montgomery								
Ella Coates	x							
Elsie Henderson	x							
Emily Ford								
Emily Harding Andrews								
Enid Koelle	x							
Enid-Gwunedd Stokoe								
Esmé Roberts	x							
Ethel Everett								
Ethel Gabain	x							
Eva Savory								
Eve Kirk			x					x
Faith Gaskell								
Fanny Moody								
Florence Lundborg								
Fran Sutton	x							

Frances Bennett	x							
Frances Halsted	x							
Freda Beard	x	x					x	x
Freda Levene								
Freda Lingstrom	x			x	x			
Frederica Graham	x	x						
Frieda Harris	x							
G M Dickinson								
Gladys Barraclough	x							
Gladys Letcher								
Gladys Meyer								
Gladys Peto				x				
Gladys Rees	x							
Grace Golden	x							
Gwen Raverat				x				
Gwynedd Hudson	x							
Helen Bryce	x							
Helen Ferguson	x							
Helen Marshall							x	
Helen Mckie							x	
Helen Willows								
Herry Perry	x				x	x		
Hilda Austin	x							
Hilda Cowham	x							
Hilda Dallas								
Hilda Lancaster								
Hope Joseph								
I Jephson		x						
Irene Fawkes	x						x	x
Irene Hawkins	x							
Ivy Norman								
Jessica Walters								
Joan Drew								
Joan Horton								
Joan Hoyle								
Joan Munroe							x	
Joy Williams	x							
Joyce Dennys								
Kate Burrell	x							
Kate Jacob(s)	x							
Katherine Cox								
Katherine Pearce								

Katherine Ritchie	x							
Kathleen Arden								
Kathleen Davy	x							
Kathleen Lawrence								
Kathleen Nixon								
Kathleen Stenning	x							
Katie McDonald								
Laura Knight	x			x				
Lesley Blanch	x							
Lili Réthi						x		
Lilian Dring								
Lilian Swanwick	x							
Lillian Hocknell				x				
Lily Gerrard								
Louise Jacobs								
Lucy Kemp Welch								
M Bartels								
M Palmer								
M.O Lilley								
Mabel Attwell	x							
Mabel Deamer								
Mabel Geer				x				
Mabel Rundle								
Mabel Spink								
Maeve Wolf								
Marcia Foster				x				
Margaret Barnard	x							
Margaret Bradley							x	
Margaret Calkin James	x		x				x	
Margaret Cawood								
Margaret Clarke							x	x
Margaret Growing								
Margaret Haythorne		x						
Margaret Hincklieff								
Margaret Horder				x				
Margaret Reynolds								
Margaret Smith								
Margaret Stuart								
Margaret Tubby								
Marguerite Doring	x							
Marie Kale								
Marie Stocquart								

Marjorie Chatterton								
Marjorie Kershaw								
Marjorie Willmott-Robinson								
Mary Adshead	x							
Mary Caine								
Mary Dawson								
Mary Florence								
Mary Hughes								
Mary Kessell			x					
Mary Koop	x							
Mary Lowndes								
Mary Wingfield								
Mary Wright		x						
Maud Klein		x						
Maude Earl								
May Bilbie								
Mela Koehler								
Mildred Rogers								
Minnie Mcleish								
Miss Aubele								
Miss Bonnett	x							
Miss Hammond		x						
Miss Woillaid								
Monica Rawlins		x						
Muriel Dawson	x							
Muriel Harris							x	
Muriel Jackson		x						
Nancy Price	x							
Nancy Smith	x							
Nina Nidermieller	x							
Nita Worth								
Nora Patterson								
Norah State								
Nowell Edwards						x	x	
Olive Harris								
Olive-Grace Bourne	x							
Pamela Colman Smith								
Pamela Drew			x					
Pauline Legard								
Peggy smith								
Phyllis Bray	x							*

Phyllis Burkinshaw								
Phyllis Dunlop								
Rhoda Dawson								
Rona Raymond								
Rosamond Curtis								
Rosemary Ellis			x					
Ruby Lindsay								
Ruth Bryant								
Ruth Collingridge	x							
Ruth Hutchings	x							
Ruth Sandys	x							
Sheila Hague								
Stella Ogle								
Stella Steyn								
Sybil Andrews	x							
Sybil Tawse	x							x
Trekkie Ritchie	x							
Ursula Gittins								
V M Macdonald	x							
Vanessa Bell			x					
Vera Ross	x							
Vera Willoughby	x							
Verna Camidge-Stead								
Violet Guy								
Violet Holdsworth	x							
Violet Robson								
Wilma Hickson								
Winifred Forgan								
Winifred Ward	x							

Table Three: Employment (part two of two)

Name	GPO	Clarks	Heals	Other	Royal Society of Industrial Arts Competition
Adeline Hone					1929
Agnes Duguid					1928
Agnes Gower					
Agnes Miller Parker					
Agnes Richardson					
Alex Tweedie					

Alexis Mcandrew					
Alice Fanner					
Alice Farmer					
Aline Dugard					1925
Alison McKenzie					
Alma Faulkner				Sketch Competition	
Althea Willoughby					
Amy Ayres					1928
Ann Bowden			x		
Ann Dallas					
Ann Fisher			x		
Ann Philipson			x		
Anna Zinkeisen					
Anne Gilchrist					1928
Annie Fletcher					
Annie Pressland					
Antonia Yeoman				Moss Bros	
Arnrid-Banniza Johnston					
Arrabella				Derry and Toms	
Audrey Stevens					
Audrey Weber					
Barbara Beaumont					1928
Barbara Stubbs					1928
Bertha Olyett					1925
Betty Batchelor					1927
Betty Beaumont					1927
Betty Cooke			x		
Betty Pinney					
Betty Ritchie					
Betty Swanwick					
Betty Ward					
Bip Pares				British India Steam Company	
Blanch Osborn					1927
Blanche Wooler				Pilot Safety Matches	
Bridget Workman					
Brynhild Parker	*				
Caroline Watts				Artists Suffrage League	

Catherine Alexander					
Catherine Courtauld				Suffrage Atelier	
Cathleen Sabine Mann					
Cecilia Murphy				British Advertising Association	1930
Chloe Preston				HP Sauce	
Christina Forsyth					1929
Christina Walshe		x			
Christine Jackson					
Clare Leighton					
Clarence Pennington					1930
Clodagh Sparrow,					
Constance Castle					
Constance Irving				Foxton Fabrics	
D Bullock					1928
Daphne Barry					1927, 1929
Dolly Tree				Film Posters	
Dora Batty		x		London County Council, Somerwell Bros	
Dora Coates				Artists Suffrage league (competition)	
Dora McLaren					
Doris Gully					1927, 1928
Doris Hatt				WW1 recruiting poster	
Doris Zinkeisen					
Dorothea Sharp					
Dorothee George					
Dorothy Bedford					
Dorothy Braddell				Health and Cleanliness Council	
Dorothy Burroughes					
Dorothy Hudson				Sketch Competition	1926
Dorothy Hutton					
Dorothy Legg					
Dorothy Mullock					

Dorothy Newsome				Indian State Railways and P&O	
Dorothy Paton					
Dorothy Wheeler					
Dulcie Corner					1930
E Marks					
Edith Barclay					1927
Edith Kemp Welch				WW1 Recruitment posters	
Edna Clarke Hall	x				
Edna Oakden					1928
Edna Rose				RSPCA competition	
Eileen Mayo				Henry Hill Ltd	
Eileen Seyd					
Elaine Haxton				Mentioned in commercial art article.	
Elizabeth Holman					
Elizabeth Montgomery				Sketch Competition	
Ella Coates					
Elsie Henderson					
Emily Ford				Artists Suffrage League	
Emily Harding Andrews				Artists Suffrage League	
Enid Koelle					
Enid-Gwunedd Stokoe					1925
Esmé Roberts					
Ethel Everett					
Ethel Gabain					
Eva Savory				own exhibition	
Eve Kirk	x				
Faith Gaskell					1926, 1929
Fanny Moody				James Buchanan and Co	
Florence Lundborg				The Lark	
Fran Sutton					
Frances Bennett					
Frances Halsted					

Freda Beard		x		Hartley's	
Freda Levene				Nestles Milk	
Freda Lingstrom				Orient Line	
Frederica Graham					
Frieda Harris					
G M Dickinson					1928
Gladys Barraclough					
Gladys Letcher				Suffrage Atelier	
Gladys Meyer				High Wycombe Summer School	
Gladys Peto					
Gladys Rees					1927
Grace Golden				ROSPA and Ministry of Information (possibly post 1939)	
Gwen Raverat					
Gwynedd Hudson					1925
Helen Bryce				Derry and Toms	
Helen Ferguson					
Helen Marshall					
Helen Mckie					
Helen Willows					1929
Herry Perry			x		
Hilda Austin					
Hilda Cowham					
Hilda Dallas				WSPU	
Hilda Lancaster					1930
Hope Joseph				Suffrage Atelier	
I Jephson					
Irene Fawkes					
Irene Hawkins					
Ivy Norman					1925, 1927
Jessica Walters				Suffrage Atelier	
Joan Drew				Artists Suffrage League	
Joan Horton					1929, 1930
Joan Hoyle					1927

Joan Munroe					
Joy Williams				Orient Line	
Joyce Dennys				WW1 Recruitment posters	
Kate Burrell				Derry and Toms	
Kate Jacob(s)					
Katherine Cox					1930
Katherine Pearce					1930
Katherine Ritchie					
Kathleen Arden					1925
Kathleen Davy					
Kathleen Lawrence					1929
Kathleen Nixon				Indian State Railways	1932
Kathleen Stenning					
Katie McDonald					1929
Laura Knight					
Lesley Blanch					
Lili Réthi	x				
Lilian Dring					under name Welch
Lilian Swanwick					
Lillian Hocknell		x			
Lily Gerrard					1929
Louise Jacobs				Suffrage Atelier	
Lucy Kemp Welch				WW1 Recruitment posters	
M Bartels				WSPU	
M Palmer				British Industry Fair Poster competition (£50)	
M.O Lilley					1928
Mabel Attwell					
Mabel Deamer					
Mabel Geer					
Mabel Rundle				Criterion Theatre	
Mabel Spink				RSPCA	
Maeve Wolf					1925
Marcia Foster				W J Locke	
Margaret Barnard					

Margaret Bradley					
Margaret Calkin James	x				
Margaret Cawood					1929
Margaret Clarke					
Margaret Growing					1929
Margaret Haythorne					
Margaret Hincklieff					1929
Margaret Horder					
Margaret Reynolds					1926
Margaret Smith					1930
Margaret Stuart				Cottage Pottery	
Margaret Tubby					1927
Marguerite Doring			x		
Marie Kale					1929
Marie Stocquart				I and R Morley	
Marjorie Chatterton					1927
Marjorie Kershaw					1928
Marjorie Willmott-Robinson					1925
Mary Adshead					
Mary Caine					1928
Mary Dawson					1925
Mary Florence				Artists Suffrage League	
Mary Hughes					1929
Mary Kessell					
Mary Koop					
Mary Lowndes				Artists Suffrage League	
Mary Wingfield					1927
Mary Wright					
Maud Klein					
Maude Earl				Shooting (Mentioned in Sparrow text)	
May Bilbie					1927, 1928, 1930
Mela Koehler		x			
Mildred Rogers				Ulster tourist board	
Minnie Mcleish				Mac Fisheries	

Miss Aubele				Phillips Radio	
Miss Bonnett					
Miss Hammond					
Miss Woillaid				Hipolite Company	
Monica Rawlins					
Muriel Dawson					
Muriel Harris					
Muriel Jackson					
Nancy Price					
Nancy Smith					
Nina Nidermieller					
Nita Worth					1928
Nora Patterson				Scottish Modern Arts Association	
Norah State					1926
Nowell Edwards				WW2	
Olive Harris				Sketch competition	1928
Olive-Grace Bourne					
Pamela Colman Smith				WW1 poster, Suffrage Atelier	
Pamela Drew					
Pauline Legard					1927
Peggy smith				League of Nations	
Phyllis Bray	*				
Phyllis Burkinshaw					1931
Phyllis Dunlop					1929
Rhoda Dawson			x		
Rona Raymond					1930
Rosamond Curtis					1929
Rosemary Ellis	x				
Ruby Lindsay				Labour party	
Ruth Bryant				K Shoes	
Ruth Collingridge					
Ruth Hutchings					
Ruth Sandys					
Sheila Hague				National Council for Animals' Welfare	
Stella Ogle					1929

Stella Steyn	x				
Sybil Andrews					
Sybil Tawse					
Trekkie Ritchie					
Ursula Gittins					1932
V M Macdonald					
Vanessa Bell	x				
Vera Ross					
Vera Willoughby					
Verna Camidge-Stead					1925
Violet Guy				Grosvenor Gallery	
Violet Holdsworth					
Violet Robson					1927
Wilma Hickson					1925
Winifred Forgan					1928, 1929
Winifred Ward					

APPENDIX TWO

Map of London marking the location of artists' residencies



FIGURES



Figure 1. Adrian Allinson, *Colonial Progress Brings Home Prosperity,* produced for EMB, 1930/31, 1524 x 1016 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 2. F C Harrison, *Make the Empire Christmas Pudding*, produced for EMB, c 1930, 1524 x 1016 mm, Lithographic Poster

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Figure 3. Herry Perry, *L.C.C Central School of Arts & Crafts,* 1929 (reprinted 1990s), 520 x 375 mm, CSM Museum & Study Collection, Woodblock Print



Figure 4. Dora Batty, *Travel with the children to the plays and pantomimes,* produced for London Transport, 1921, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 5. Dora Batty, *Shopping*, produced for London Transport, 1925, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 6. Dora Batty, *Picnics and Rambles*, produced for London Transport, 1925, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 7. Dora Batty, *Theatres and Dances*, produced for London Transport, 1925, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 8. Anna Zinkeisen, *Harrogate*, produced for LNER, 1933, 1265 x 1016 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 9. Anna Zinkeisen, *Richmond Horse Show,* produced for London Transport, 1934, 267 x 312 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 10. Recreation of ink mixing used in *Richmond* poster, authors own

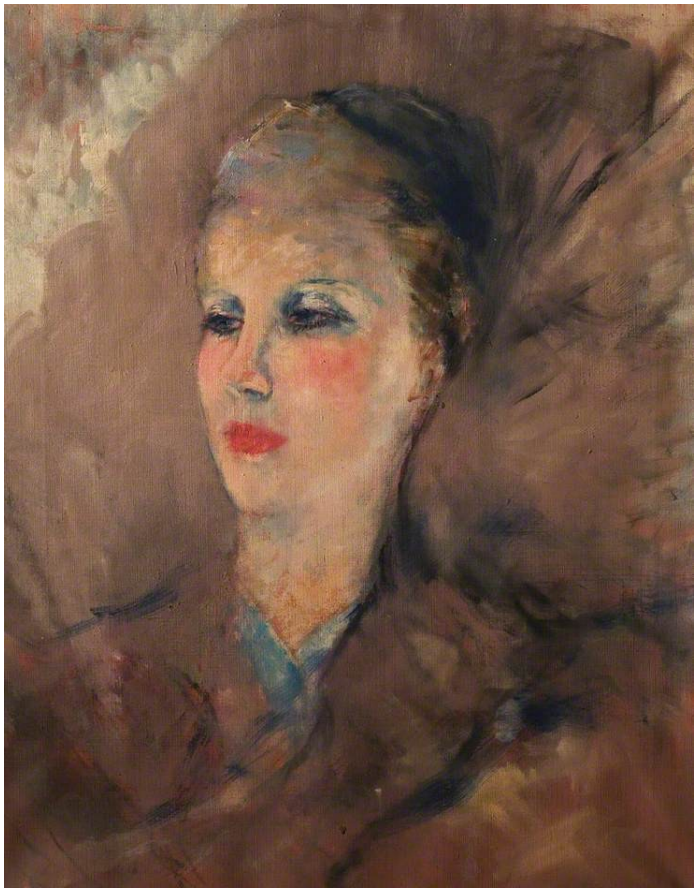


Figure 11. Anna Zinkeisen, *Diana Wynyard*, c. 1930, 535 x 437 mm, Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Oil on Canvas



Figure 12. Anna Zinkeisen, *The Dark Lady*,1938, 610 x 508 mm, Nottingham Castle and Art Gallery, Oil on Canvas



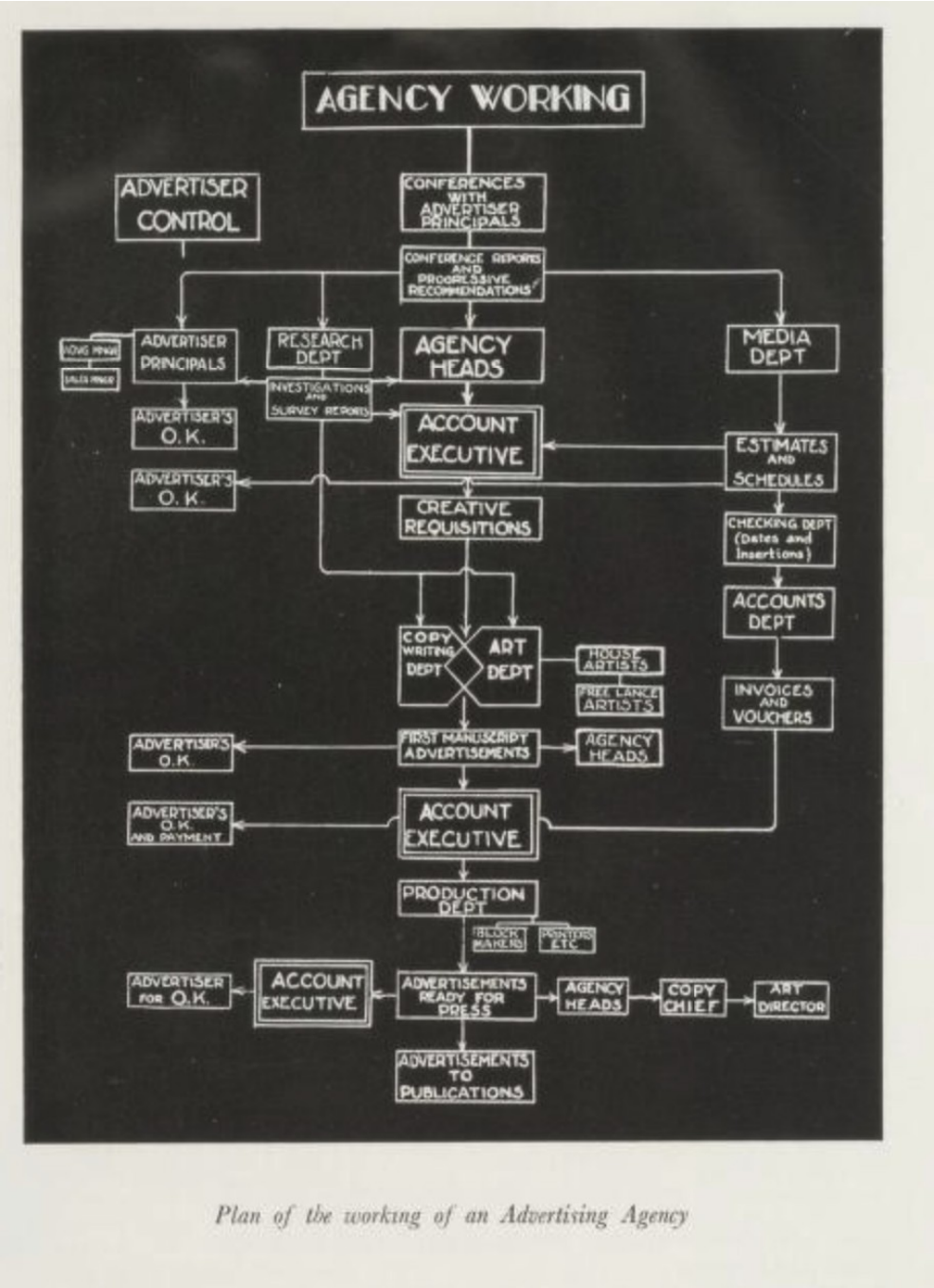
Figure 13. Daphne Barry, *LCC*, 1926, Lithographic Poster printed in 'The elements of the Poster' *Commercial Art,* January 1928, p. 221



Figure 14. C R W Nevinson, *Bursting Shell*, 1915, 760 × 560 mm, Tate Britain, Oil on Canvas



Figure 15. Mark Severin, *The Advertising Agency at Work,* 1934, printed in *Modern Publicity*, p. 10



Plan of the working of an Advertising Agency

Figure 16. *Plan of an Advertising Agency,* printed in W W J Studd, 'The Advertising Agency and what it should provide' *Commercial Art,* February 1931, p. 43



Figure 17. Vanessa Bell, *Alfriston*, produced for Shell Mex Oil, 1931, 1117 x 757 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 18. Vanessa Bell, *Post Early,* produced for the GPO, 1935/6, 635 x 508 mm Lithographic Poster

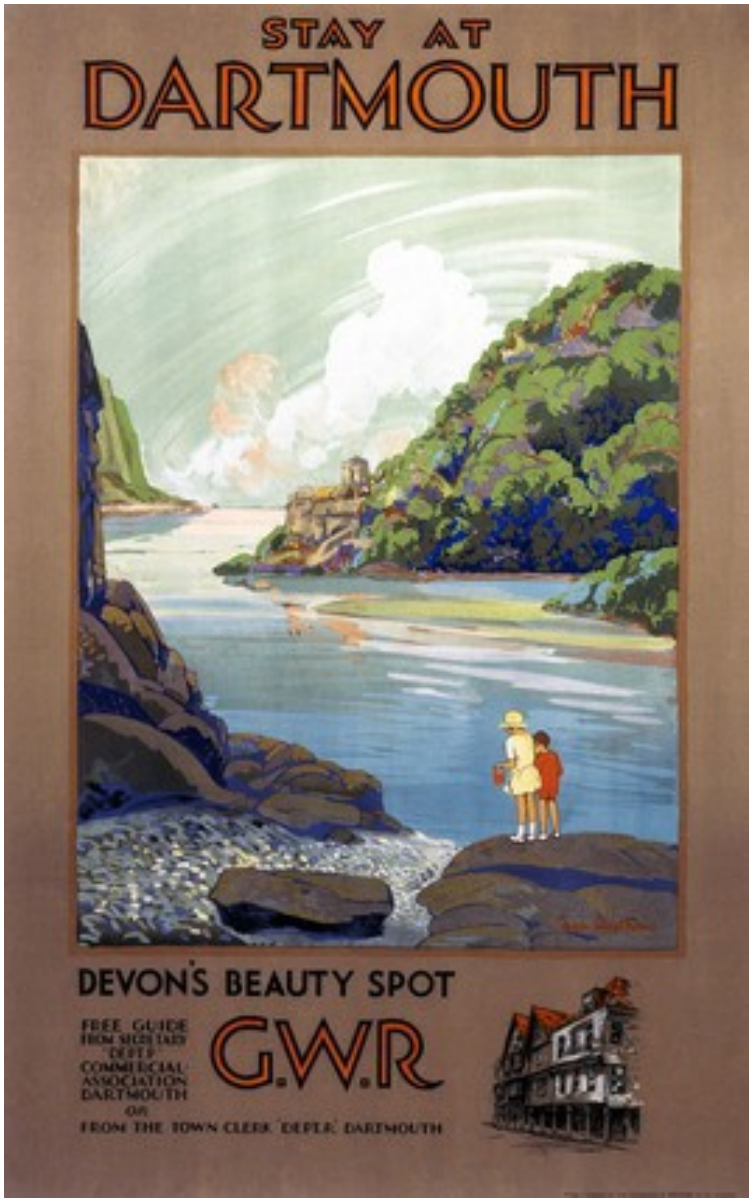


Figure 19. Freda Lingstrom, *Stay At Dartmouth*, produced for the GWR, 1930s, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster

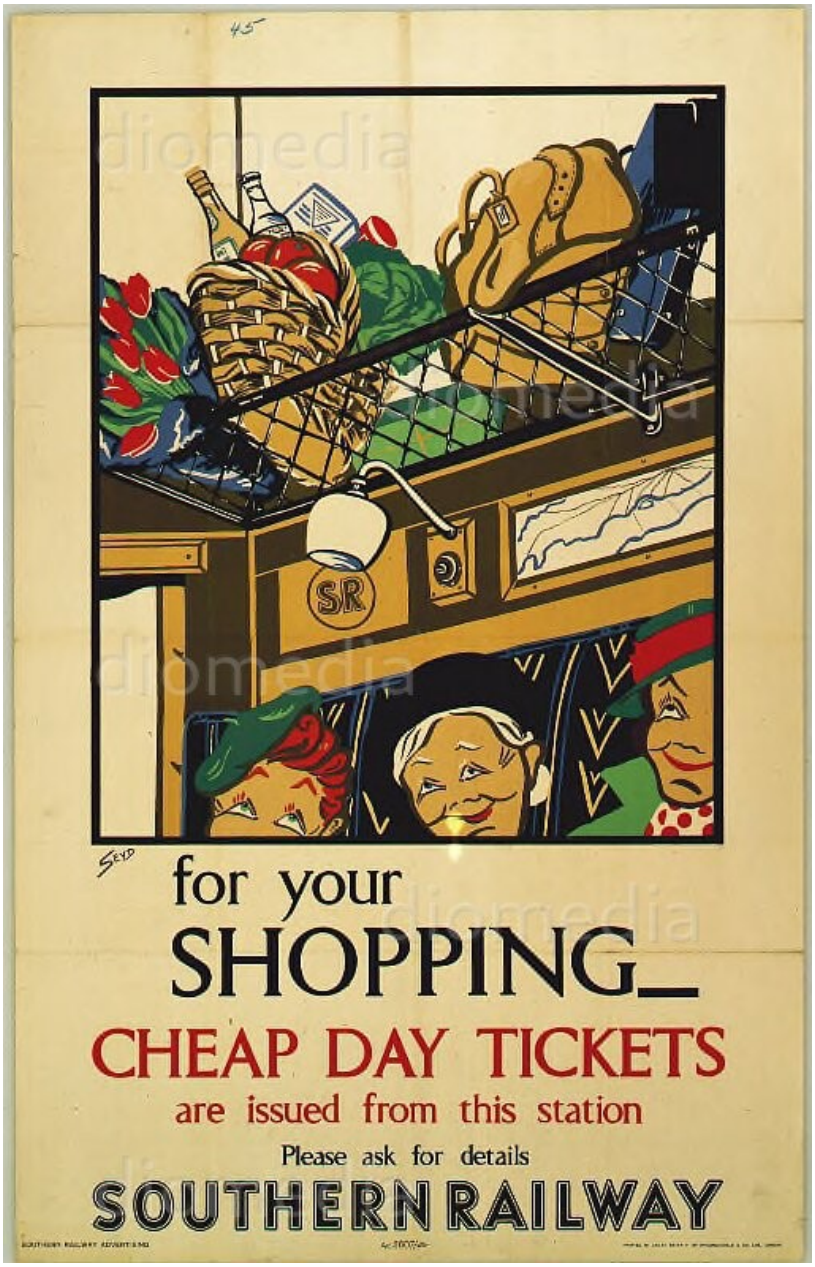


Figure 20. Eileen Seyd, *For Your Shopping*, produced for SR, 1927, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster

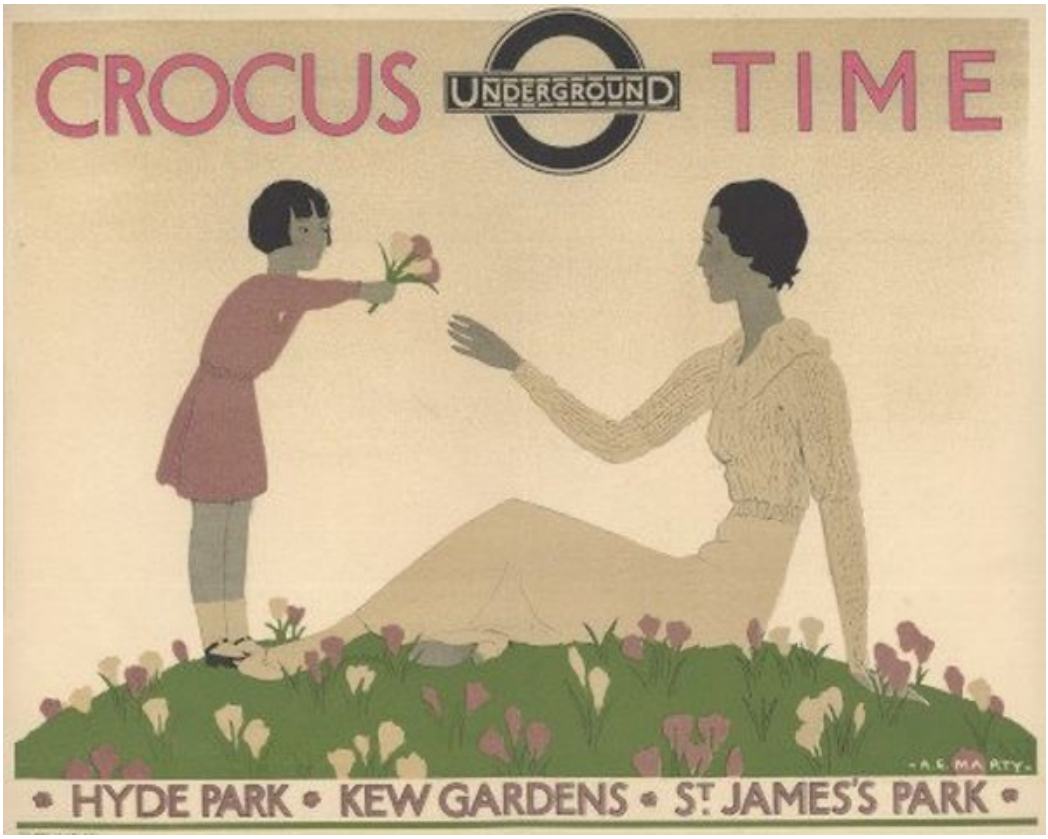


Figure 21. Andre Marty, *Crocus Time*, produced for London Transport, 1933, 255 x 318 mm, Lithographic Poster

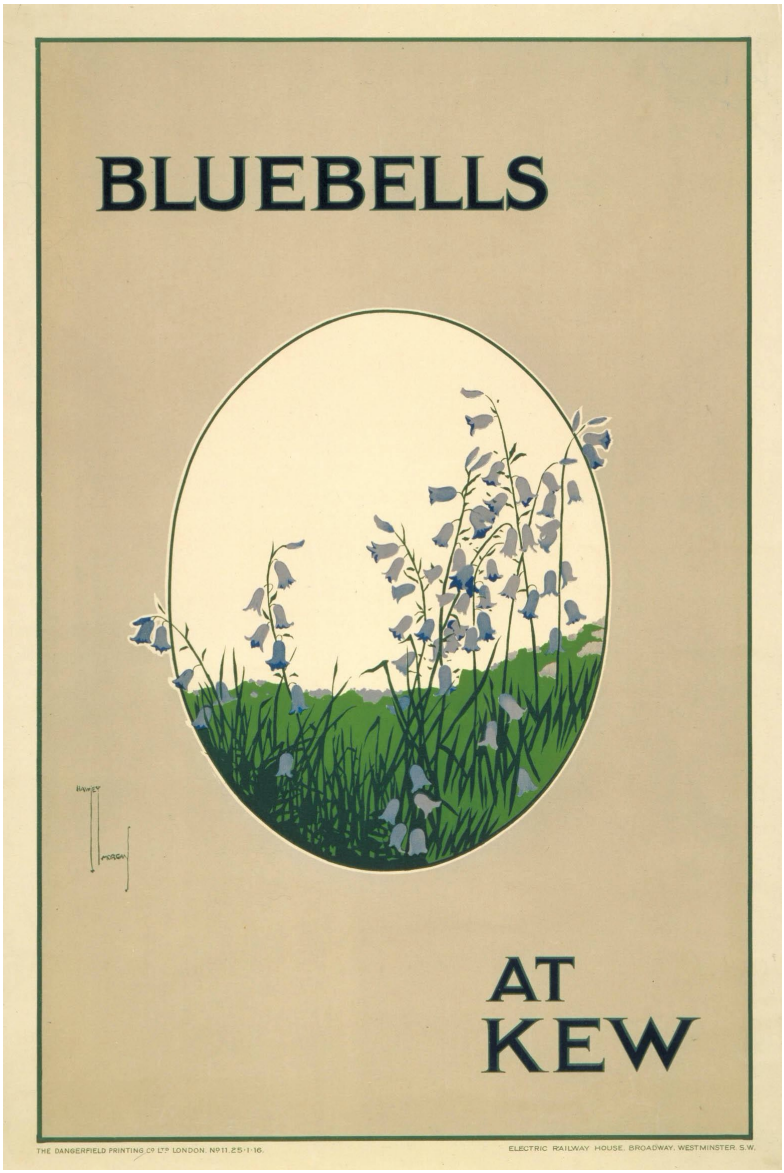


Figure 22. Hawley Morgan, *Bluebells at Crew*, produced for London Transport, 1916, 762 x 508 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 23. Dorothy Hutton, *Bluebell Time*, produced for London Transport, 1935, 254 x 737 mm, Lithographic Poster

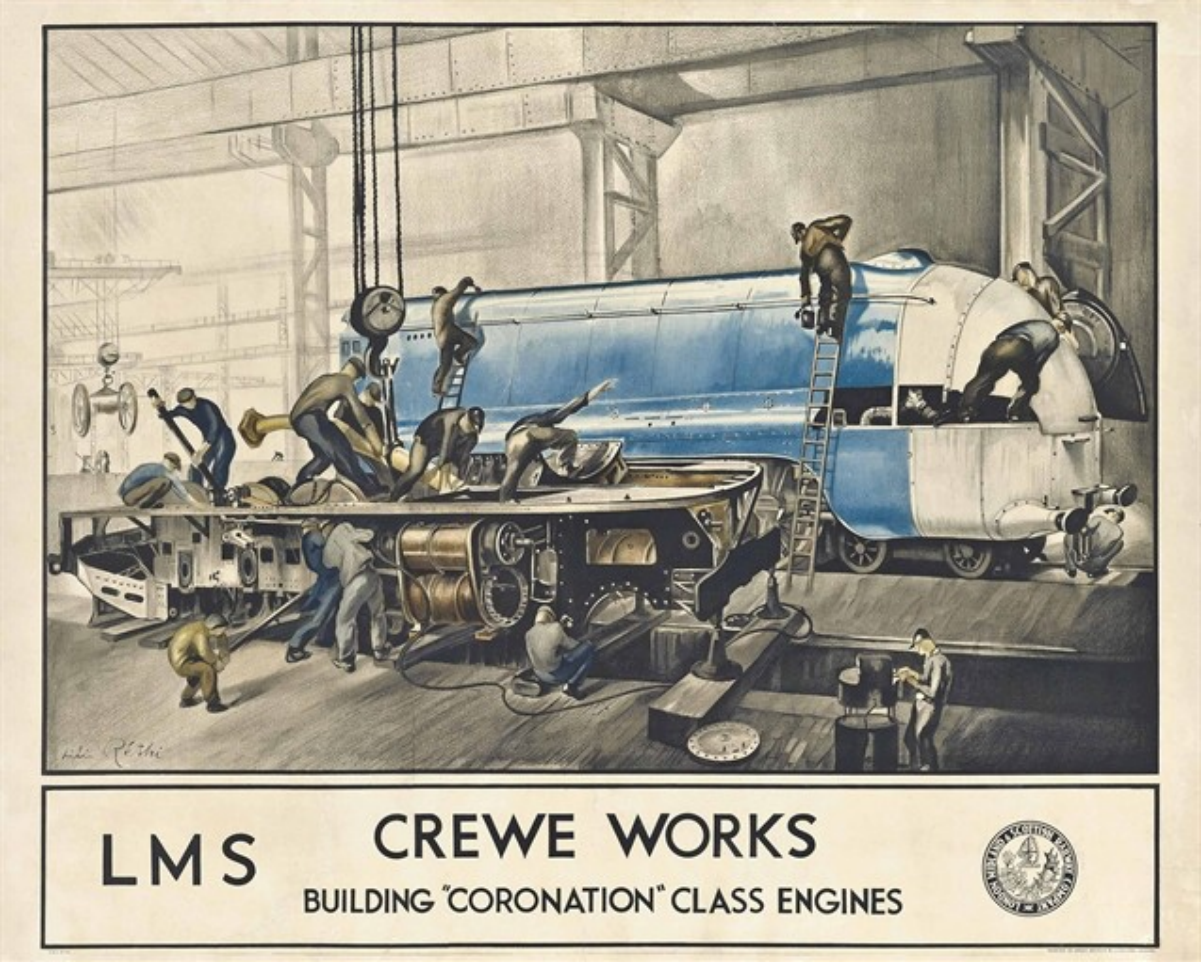


Figure 24. Lili Réthi*, Crewe Works,* produced for LMS, 1937, 990 x 1230 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 25. Norman Wilkinson, *Building an Engine at Crewe Works*, produced for LMS, 1930s, 1016 x 1270 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 26. Victoria Underground station, taken for Topical Press, 3 May 1924, B/W glass neg, (reference number 1998/79425)

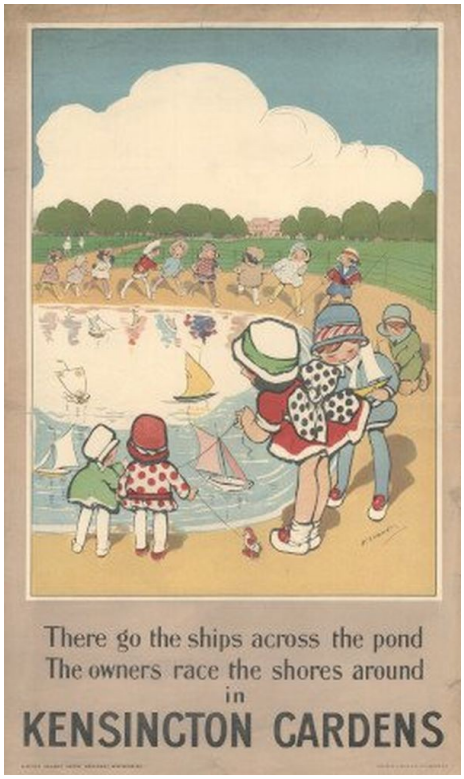


Figure 27. Hilda Cowham, *Kensington Gardens,* produced for London Transport, 1915, 520 x 305 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 28. Dora McLaren, *Horsenden Hill,* produced for London Transport, 1914, 1524 x 1016 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 29. Mary Lowndes, *Justice at the Door,* 1912, size unknown, produced for Artists Suffrage League, Lithographic Poster



Figure 30. John Hassall, *A Suffragettes Home,* produced for National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage, 1910, size unknown, Lithographic Poster

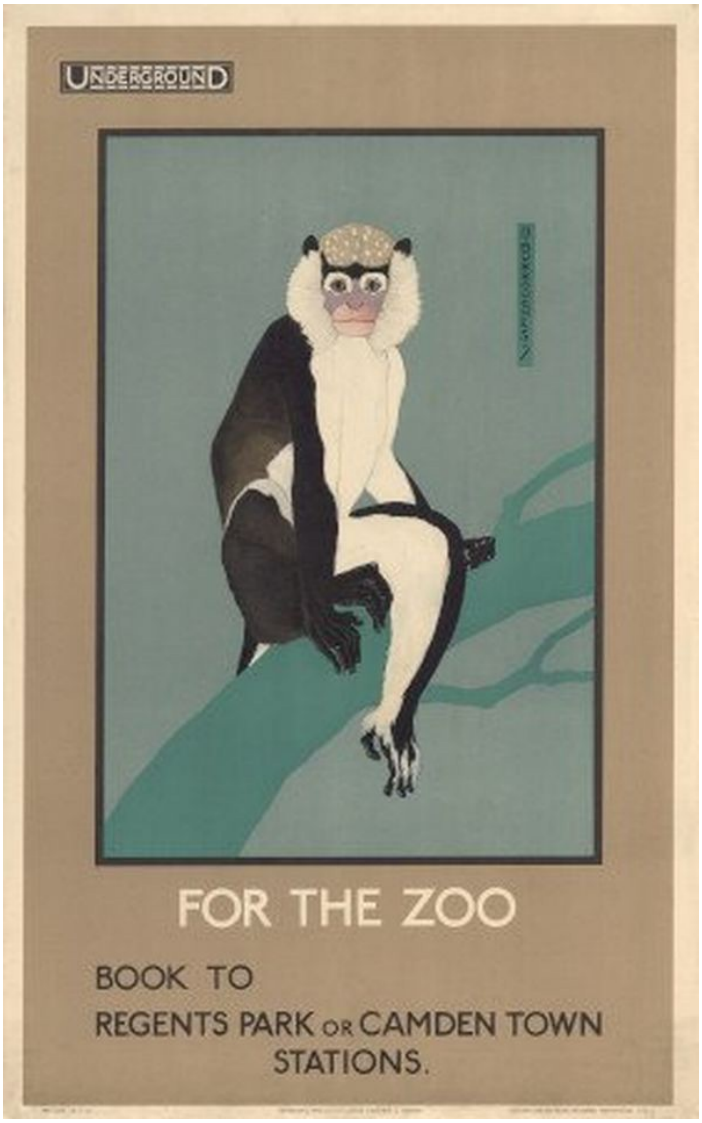


Figure 31. Dorothy Burroughes, For the Zoo, produced for London Transport, 1922, 1016 x 365 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 32. Herry Perry, *Cup Final,* produced for London Transport, 1935, 255 x 318 mm, Lithographic Poster

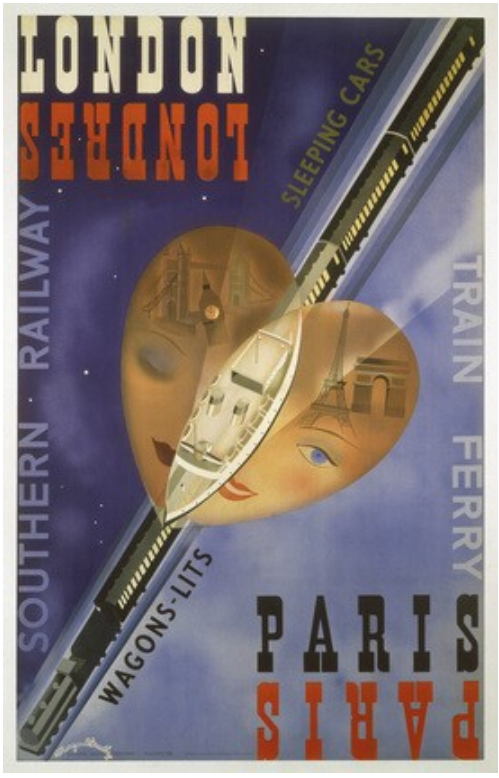


Figure 33. Margaret Bradley, *London-Paris Train Ferry,* produced for SR, 1935, 1007 x 633 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 34. Audrey Weber, *Untitled,* size unknown, Private Collection, Oil on Canvas



Figure 35. Irene Fawkes, *Silver Jubilee,* produced for London Transport, 1935, 355 x 205 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 36. Dora Batty, *The Underground Brings all Good Things Nearer,* produced for London Transport, 1932, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 37. Anna Zinkeisen, *London by LNER,* produced for LNER, 1933, 1016 x 1270 mm Lithographic Poster



Figure 38. Doris Zinkeisen, *Scarborough,* produced for LNER, 1935, 1016 x 1270 mm Lithographic Poster



Figure 39. Mary Adshead, *Studio Interior,* size unknown, Private Collection, Painting



Figure. 40 Dell and Wainwright, *Studio 1 Chester Gate,* 1930, size unknown, Photograph



Fig. 41. Dell and Wainwright, *Margaret Calkin James's studio at 39, South Grove*, 1934, size unknown, from the *Architects Journal,* , Photograph



Figure 42. Kate Burrell, *South Harrow,* produced for London Transport, 1928 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster

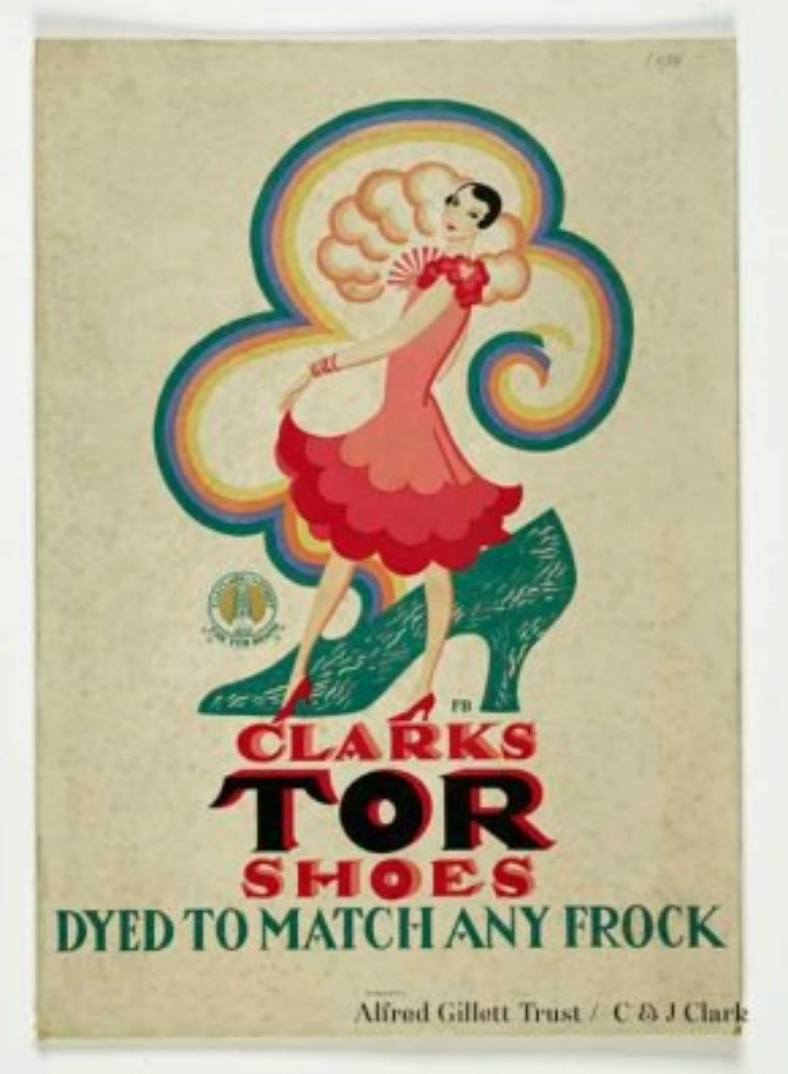


Figure 43. Freda Beard*, Tor Shoes,* produced for C&J Clark, 1928, size unknown, sketch for Lithographic Poster

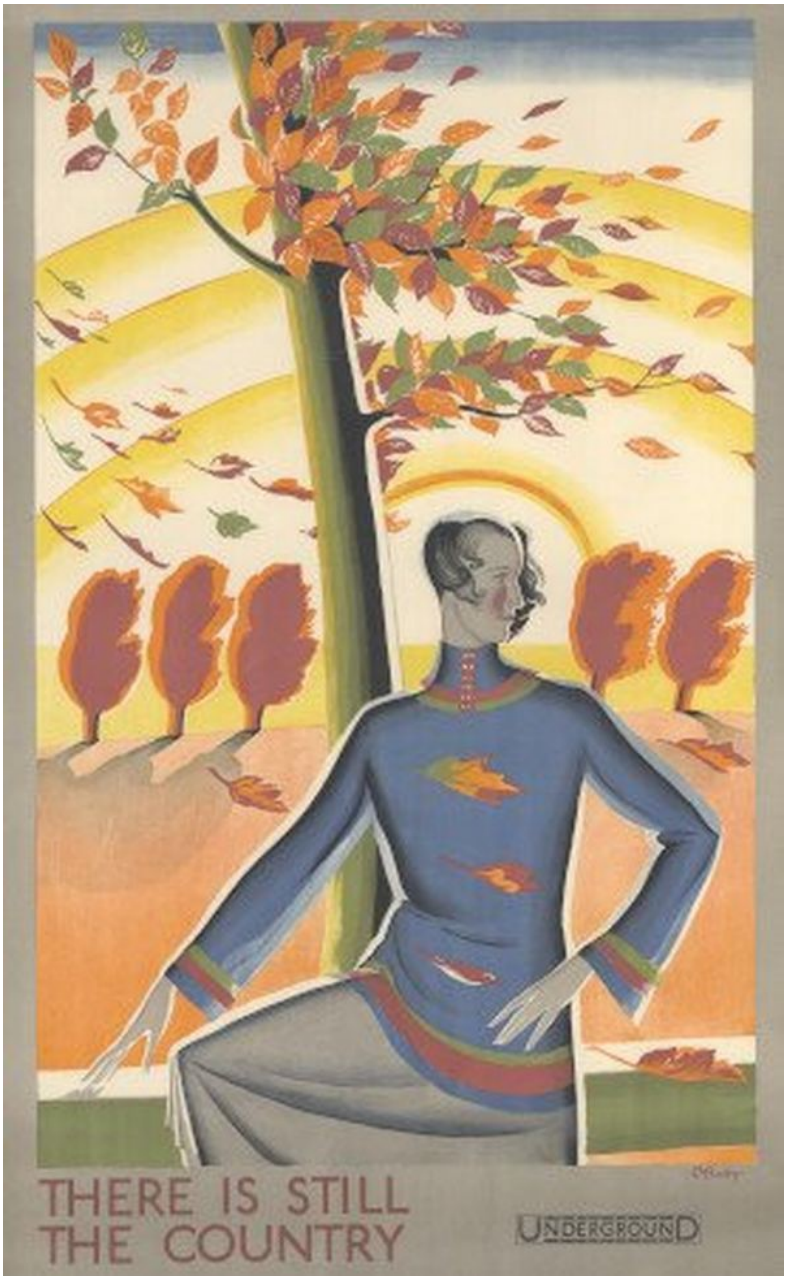


Figure 44. Dora Batty*, There is Still the Country,* produced for London Transport, 1926, 1016 x 635mm, Lithographic Poster



EVE, June 9, 1926 515

MEANDER IN PARIS—*continued from page 513*

You see quite as many felt hats as you did in the winter. Then there is soft plaited straw. I saw a woman having tea at the Ritz this week who was wearing a toque, almost a turban, of soft bands of plaited black and white straw with a dress and cape of black satin and a long soft jabot of white chiffon. Here and there gleamed a diamond pin and there were the usual yards of pearls. Alongside her sat a girl in navy blue allied to cornflower blue as a trimming. She wore a grey fox fur and a blue hat trimmed with silver, not much of it, but just enough to make the hat look like a dark cloud with a silver lining. That is what I have noticed: brightness flashes against something dark or neutral. A vivid colour, a flash of gold or silver, a gleam of jet. You see a black or navy blue dress or ensemble flashed with gold and red. There is one little dress *chez* Tollman which is as popular as Charlie Chaplin for the season. It is slightly flared from the hips and has slanting pockets at the sides outlined with red and gold embroidery and a fan of gold and red embroidery sticking out from each pocket. The same embroidery outlines the short V of the neck and trims the bands from the long tight sleeves. A dress in georgette of two shades of the old-fashioned fuchsia flowers is another success of the year. It has no trimming, but is just draped to show the two colours in the right proportions. It is ideal for a woman with white hair and a good complexion. And ladies who are no longer in their first youth do well not to have their skirts too short. This has been made clear at more than one luncheon, tea, and dinner party lately, and there are society women in Paris with a reputation for good dressing who still wear their skirts to their ankles.

When the officers of three American regiments who had come to lay a wreath on the unknown soldier's grave were entertained at the Interallied Club to luncheon, American and Frenchwomen all turned up in their very best tailor-mades and ensembles. One wore a black cloth coat and skirt piped with silk braid and the skirt folded at the back instead of at the front. Her hat was black and small, and in front of the coat hung one of the fashionable plissé white jabots which make for softness and are more becoming that hard waistcoats. A fair woman was wearing a light tweed coat with a brown leather belt and buckle at the back only. By the way, there is a perfect plague of belts and buckles of all lengths and widths, worn in the most unexpected places. For instance: a very pretty woman had a navy blue ensemble and on the coat a lighter blue suède buckle and belt, and again, round a navy blue hat which had no brim and a soft crown, was passed a lighter blue suède belt and buckle clasping the head all round. A woman of some years wore a black satin skirt, a red satin jumper clasped tightly round the hem with a black satin belt and buckle. The coat was long and beautifully cut, and round her throat she wore a band of black satin tightly clasped. The hat, too, was in black satin, stockings of the finest black silk and black satin shoes. A rather fantastic lady wore a dress and short full basqued coat of green moiré. She looked as if she had stepped out of an eighteenth century picture with her lace wrist frills, her lace jabot, her waist higher set than is commonly seen, her big green hat and a green walking stick. In many of the new moiré ensembles one notices this eighteenth century look. Perhaps it is a forecast of what is coming. For more than one leader of fashions in the world of Parisian society would like to see the old, feminine styles back again and the boyish ease of the present day less emphasised.

Wherever one goes, whether it be to the Salon on a Friday, to see Greck at the Palace in the evening, at many variety entertainments, a mannequin parade is sure to come into the programme, and there are several signs which point to a revival of the higher waistline and the fuller hips. All through the season Lanvin's dresses have been marked by this fashion and now Louise

(*Continued on page 538*)

A delicious little lace and organdi collar adds its voice to the arguments in favour of a smart tailor-made of beige rep with buttons and pipings of self coloured satin which is sponsored by Lucile

A post-meridian idea becomes a fact when Lucile takes crêpe georgette of brisk colour and two tones of beige and ingeniously uses the darker beige for decorative and ubiquitous plissé frillings

The Primavera spirit animates a frock of green and white foulard which insists still further on pristine freshness by amassing a gilet and transparent sleeves of white organdi. Philippe et Gaston

Figure 45. Fashion plate page from *Eve* magazine June 1926



Figure 46. Gladys Peto*, Outings on the LNER,* produced for LNER, 1924, 1014 x 631 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 47. Alma Faulkner*, Your New Dress,* produced for London Transport, 1928, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 48. reproduction of *On with the Dance,* Lithographic Poster*,* printed in *The Daily Sketch,* 3rd October 1925



Figure 49. Jules Chéret, *Folies-Bergère, La Loïe Fuller,* 1893 ,1232 x 876 mm, Lithographic Poster

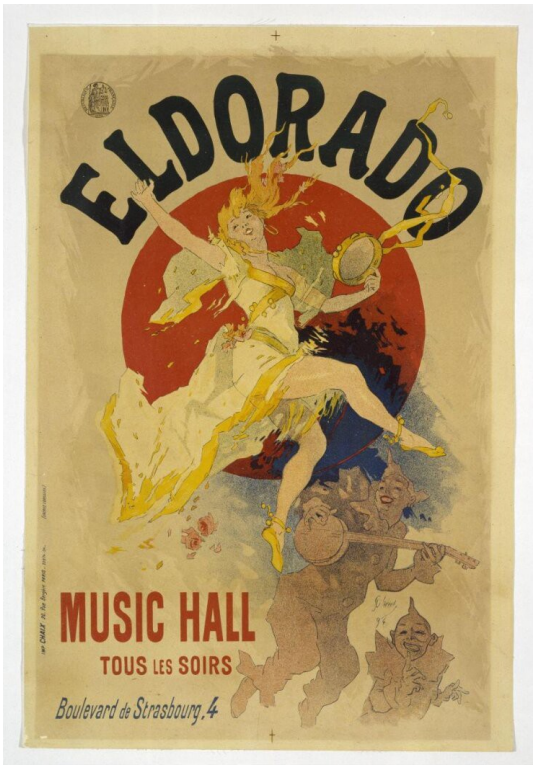


Figure 50. Jules Chéret, *Eldorado Music Hall,* 1894, 590 x 405 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 51. Charles Pears*, The Cambrian Coast,* produced for GWR, 1930s, 1016 x 1270 mm Lithographic Poster

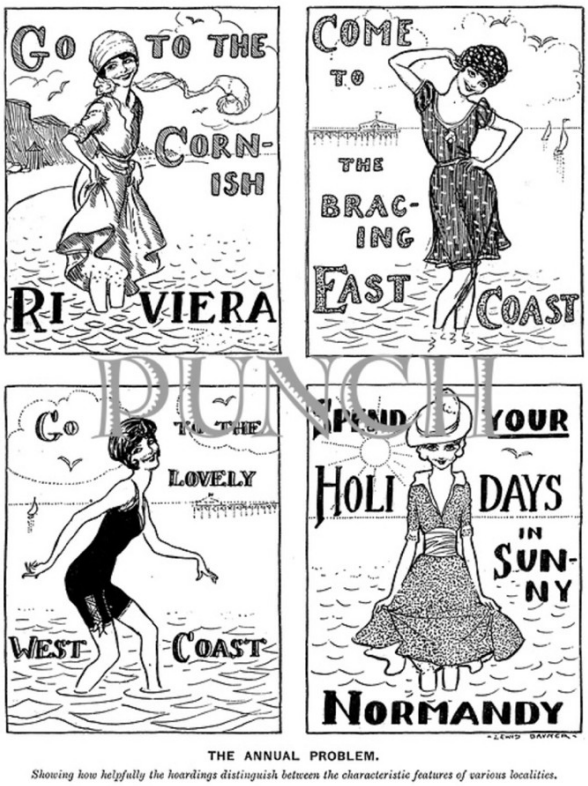


Figure 52. Lewis Baumer*, The Annual Problem,* produced for Punch, 1914, Printed Illustration



Figure 53. Laura Knight*, The Yorkshire Coast,* produced for LNER, 1929, 1000 x 1253 mm Lithographic Poster

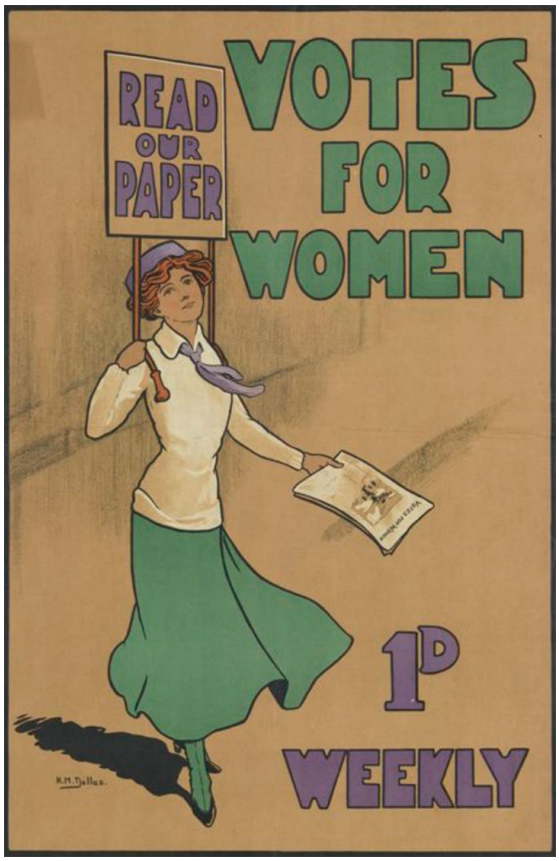


Figure 54. Hilda Dallas*, Votes for Women*, produced for Women's Social and Political Union, c.1912, 750 x 498 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 55. Unknown, Platform view at Hammersmith station with a number of passengers waiting for a train, 1914, B/W glass neg, (reference number 1998/74131)

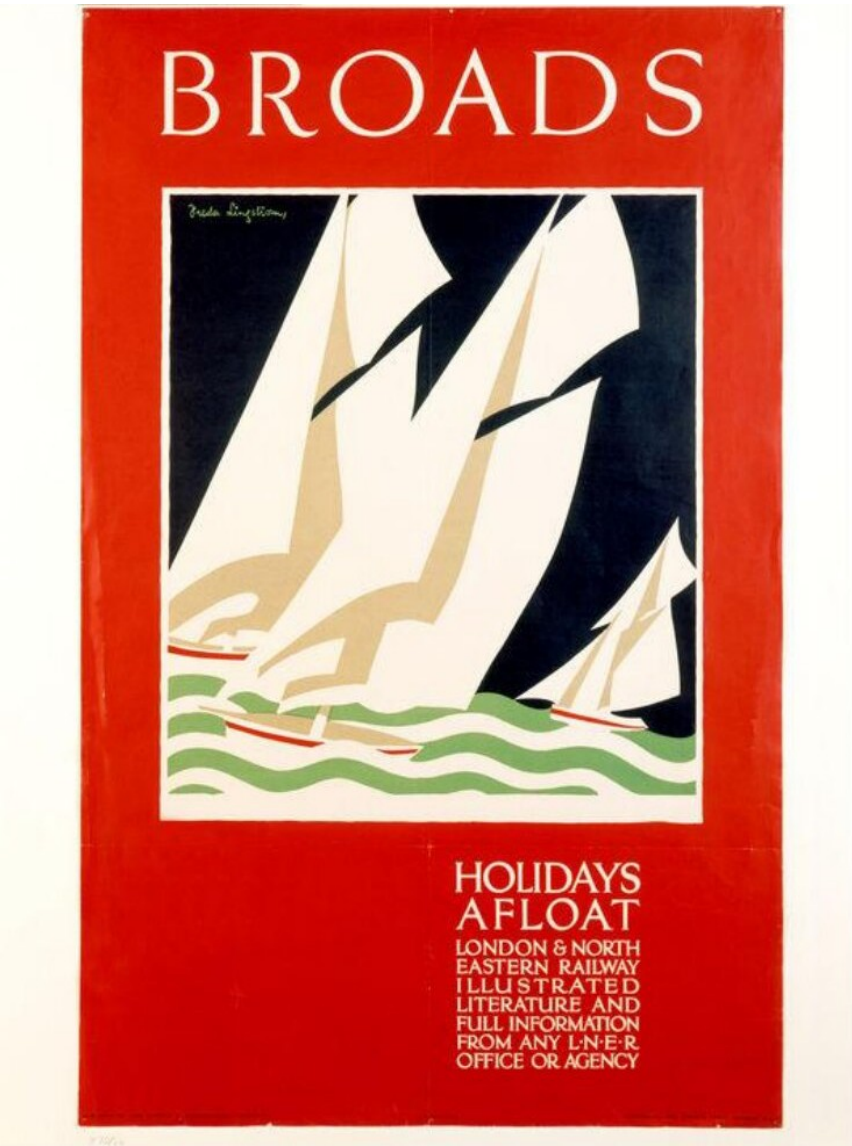


Figure 56. Freda Lingstrom, *Holidays Afloat,* produced for LNER, 1926, 1002 x 629 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 57 - 60. Kathleen Stenning, *Travel Underground,* produced for London Transport, 1925, each 502 x 298 mm, Lithographic Posters



Figure 61. Alfred Frances, *The Way for All,* produced for London Transport, 1911, 1005 x 628 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 62. D Macphearson, *Piccadilly Circus,* produced for London Transport, 1930, Print

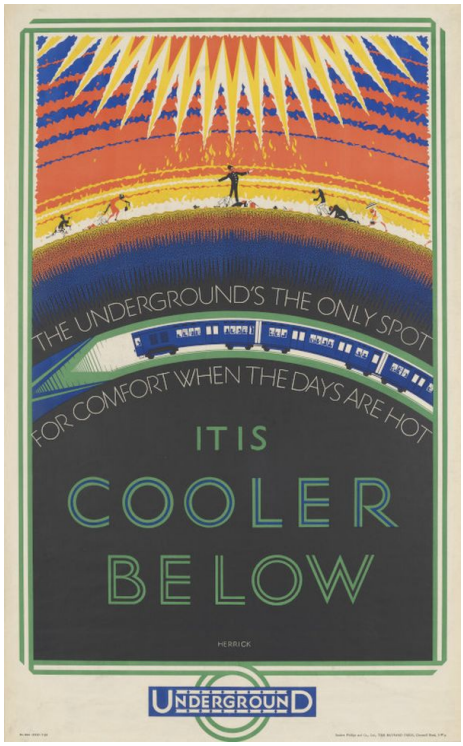


Figure 63. Frederick Herrick, *It Is Cooler Below*, produced for London Transport, 1926, 1010 x 625 mm, Lithographic Poster

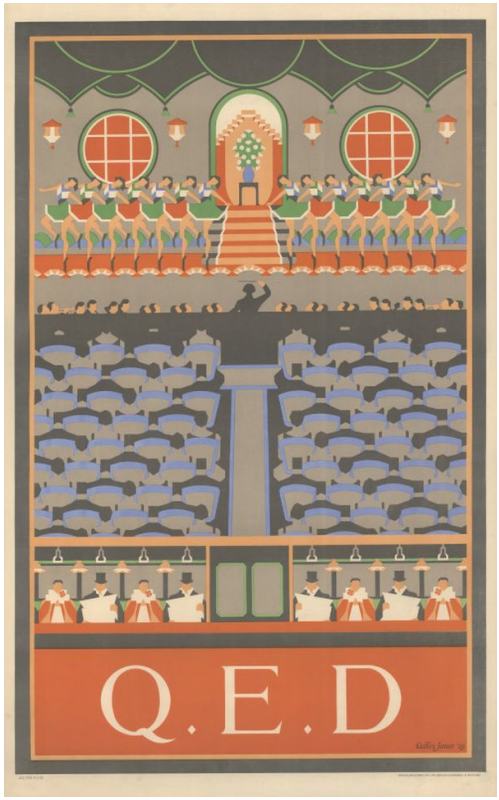


Figure 64. Margaret Calkin James, *Q.E.D*, produced for London Transport, 1929, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 65. Sybil Andrews, *Epsom*, produced for London Transport, 1933, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster

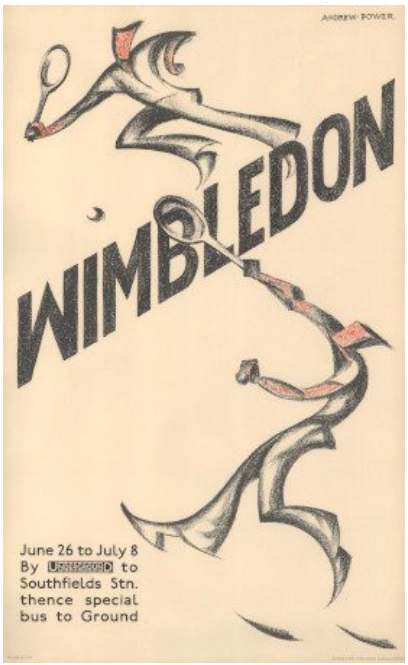


Figure 66. Sybil Andrews, *Wimbledon*, produced for London Transport, 1933, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 67. Sybil Andrews, *Football*, produced for London Transport, 1933, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 68. Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, *Red Stone Dancer drawing,* 1919, from Notebook (size unknown), Cambridge University Library, Pen and Ink



Figure 69. Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, *Red Stone Dancer* 1913, 432 x 229 x 229 mm, Tate, Stone sculpture



Figure 70. Annie Fletcher, *Shop Between Ten and Four*, produced for London Transport, 1926, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster

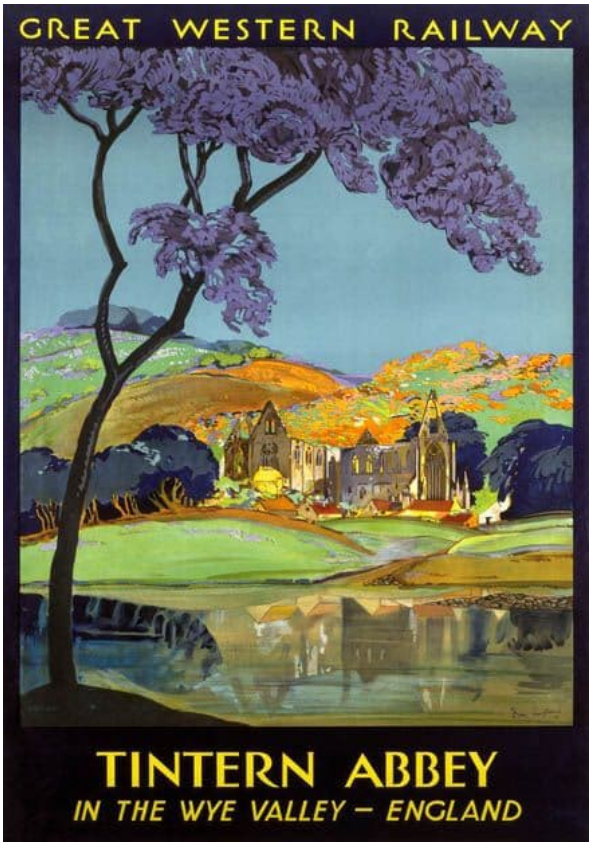


Figure 71. Freda Lingstrom, *Tintern Abbey*, produced for GWR, 1930, 1016 x 635 mm, Lithographic Poster



Figure 72. Clare Leighton, *Threshing*, produced for EMB, 1927, 1524 x 1016 mm, Lithographic Poster

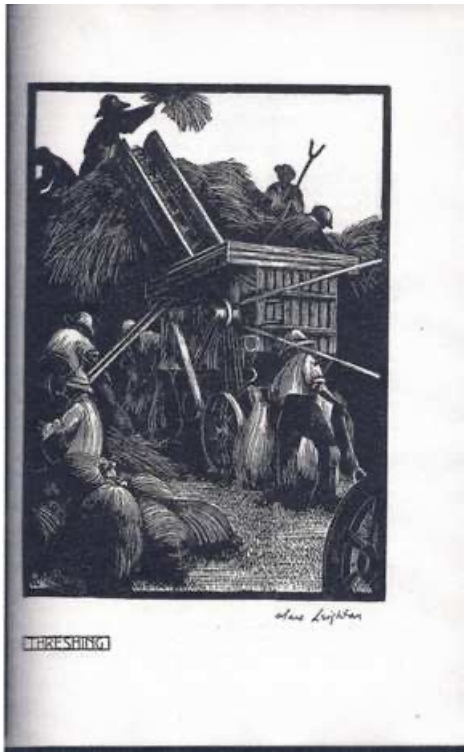


Figure 73. Clare Leighton, *Threshing*, produced for *The Forum*, 1926, size unknown, Wood Engraving

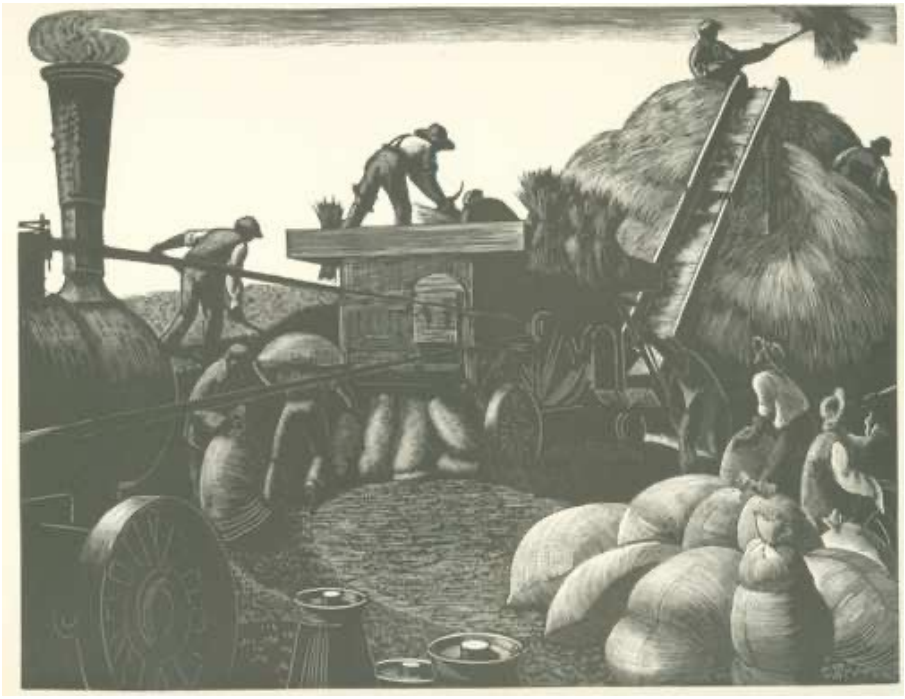


Figure 74. Clare Leighton, *Threshing: March*, 1933, printed in *The Farmers Year,* Wood Engraving

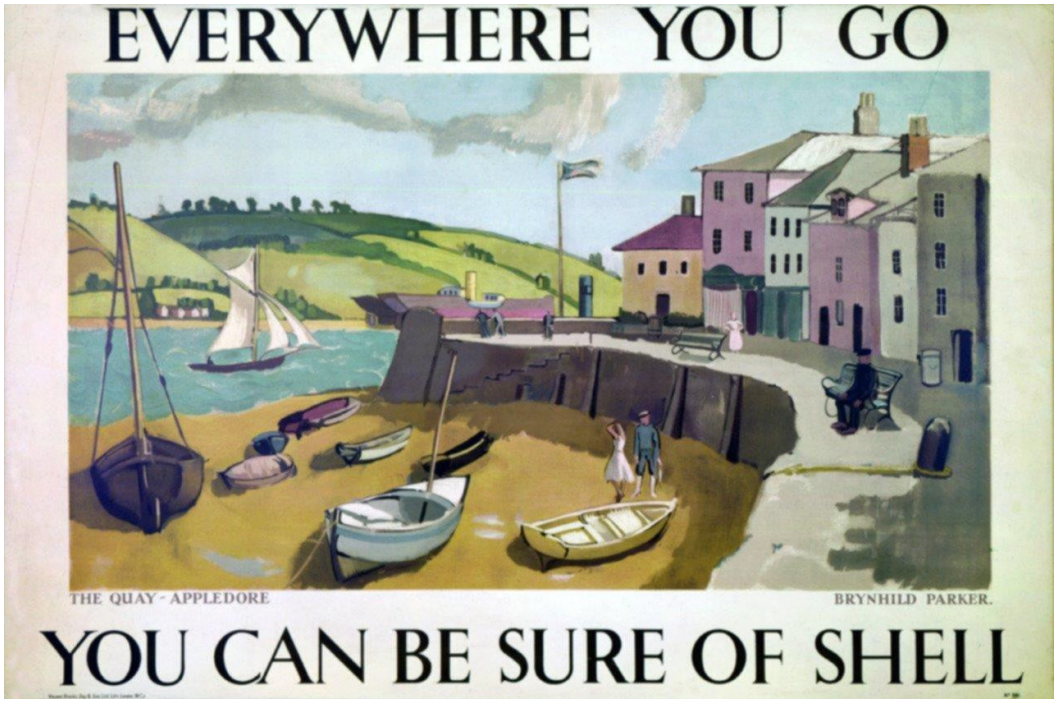


Figure 75. Brynhild Parker, *Appledore*, 1932, produced for Shell Oil, 762 x 1143 mm Lithographic Poster



Figure 76. Brynhild Parker, *Harbour*, 1930, Private Collection, 423 x 633 mm, Oil on Canvas

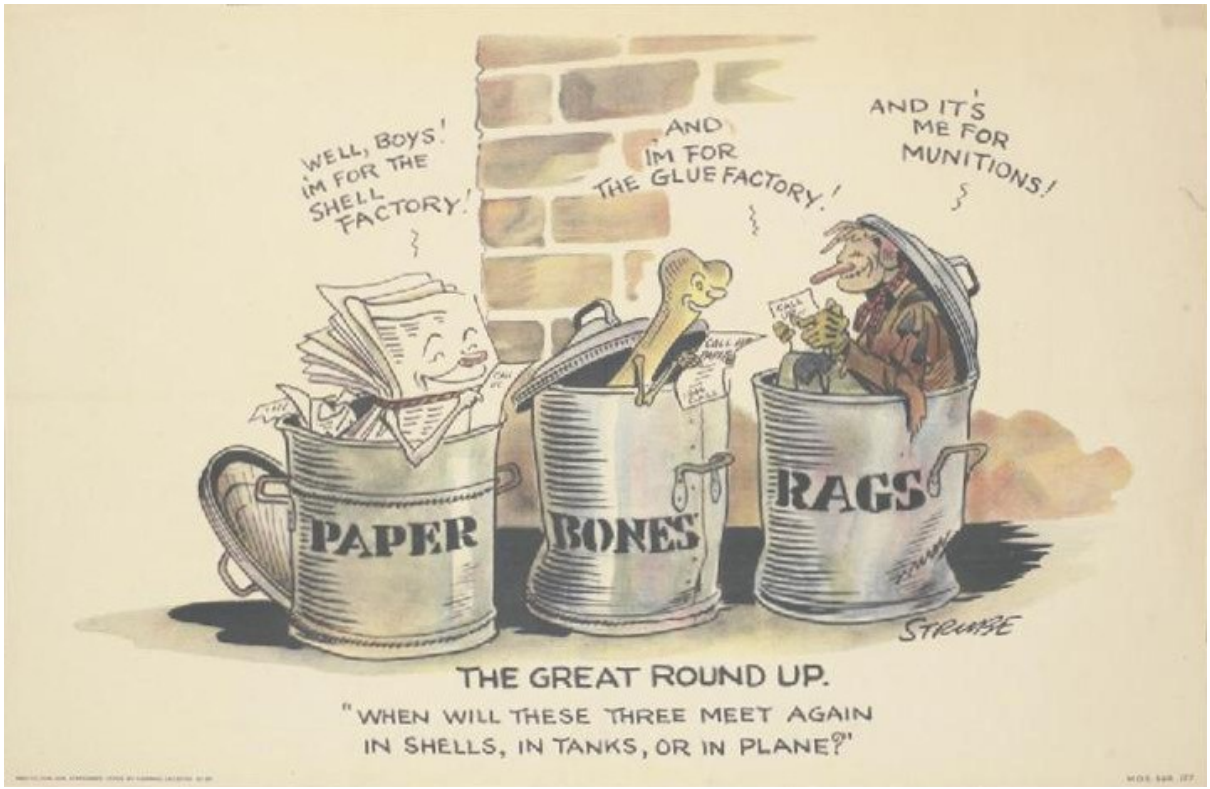


Figure 77. Strube, *The Great Round Up,* produced for The Ministry of Supply, c.1940, 493 x 748 mm, Lithographic Poster

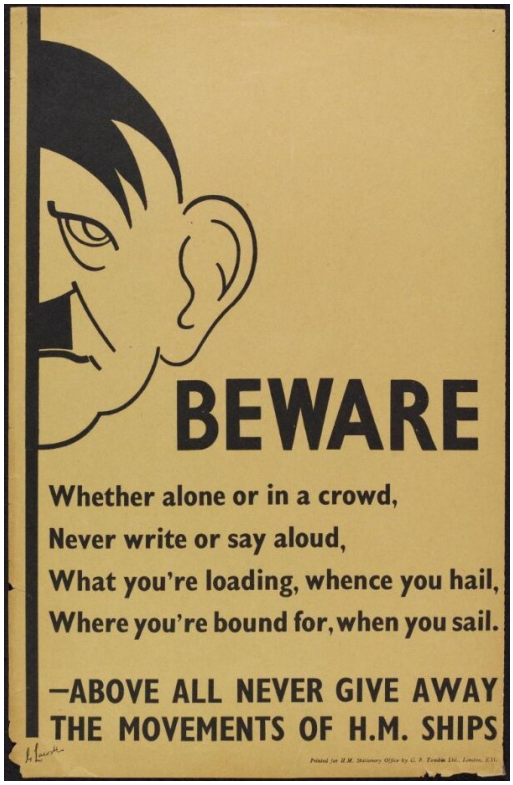


Figure 78. Gerald Lacoste, *Beware,* War Poster, 1942, 381 x 508 mm, Lithographic Poster

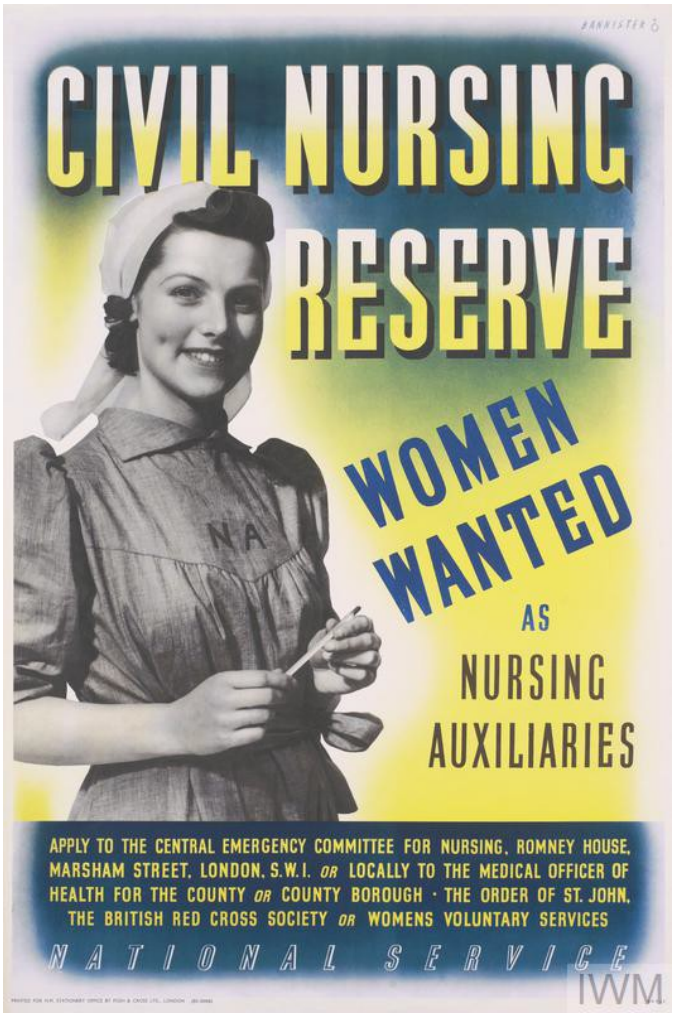


Figure 79. Unknown, *Civil Nursing Reserve,* War Poster, c.1940, 760 x 506 mm, Lithographic Poster