



Enid Marx: Print, Pattern and Popular Art

At House of Illustration's Main Gallery
25 May – 23 September 2018

**A major retrospective of the work of Enid Marx,
an artist who defined mid-20th century design**



Enid Marx (1902-1998) was a textile designer, printmaker and illustrator who, alongside her contemporaries Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden, defined mid-20th century design.

The exhibition will be the most comprehensive retrospective of Marx's work to be mounted in the last 40 years. It will bring together over 150 pieces from private and public collections, many previously unseen.

She is best known today for her industrial textiles for the London Transport Board and wartime Utility Furniture Scheme. But over a career spanning seven decades her work was extraordinarily varied, encompassing patterned paper for Curwen Press, book illustration for King Penguin as well as stamp, poster and print design.

The exhibition is co-curated by historian Dr Alan Powers, author of the first monograph on Marx, to be published by Lund Humphries in March.

Marx studied at the Royal College of Art during the interwar years, alongside Ravilious and Bawden under Paul Nash, who championed her work.

While still at college in 1925 she was commissioned to create patterned papers for Curwen Press, block-printed using wood engravings. Marx subsequently applied this technique to fabric to create her most celebrated textile designs, fusing a modern aesthetic with traditional methods inspired by her collection of Popular Art.

In 1937 she was commissioned to create the seating moquette for London Transport's bus and tube train seats. This marked a pivotal progression into industrial design, and her economical yet colourful geometric weaves remain in production today. It led to her appointment to the Utility Furniture Scheme in 1944, for which she created 30 upholstery and curtain fabric designs using limited wartime supplies of yarn.

Alongside textile design Marx wrote and illustrated her own children's books including *Little White Bear* and *The Pigeon Ace*, published by Faber & Faber and recently reprinted by Unicorn Press. She also created four book covers for King Penguin including *Some British Moths* in 1945 and *Greek Terracottas* in 1950, and in 1953 Marx designed the definitive stamps for Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation.

Co-Curator, Olivia Ahmad, said: "Enid Marx was a pioneering designer whose broad interests in abstract modernism and Popular Art traditions inspired remarkable achievements in textile design, book illustration and printmaking. This exhibition, and Alan Powers' book, comes at a time of increased focus on the achievements of the Royal College of Art's interwar graduates, and in particular Marx's male peers Eric Ravilious and Edward Bawden. Her distinctive contribution to this critical period of British design deserves the same recognition."

The exhibition is generously supported by the Jeremy and John Sacher Charitable Trust.

CONTACT DETAILS

For images and interviews contact Amy Forshaw: amy.forshaw@houseofillustration.org.uk / 020 3696 2028

IMAGE CREDITS

Bamboo pattern paper for the Little Gallery, from wood engraving, c1930 © Estate of Enid Marx

Ark 1 Carried in Comfort, linocut in six colours, 1955, 32x50cm © Estate of Enid Marx

Study for Chevron, pencil and gouache on paper, 1937 © Estate of Enid Marx

LISTINGS INFORMATION

Enid Marx: Print, Pattern and Popular Art

25 May – 23 September 2018

Main Gallery at House of Illustration, 2 Granary Square, King's Cross, London N1C 4BH

Open Tuesday-Sunday 10am-6pm (closed Monday)

Admission (one ticket gives admission to all three galleries) £8.25 inc gift aid

020 3696 2020, houseofillustration.org.uk, [facebook.com/houseofillustration](https://www.facebook.com/houseofillustration), @illustrationHQ

Exhibitions currently on: [Gerald Scarfe: Stage and Screen](#) (until 10 February)

[Quentin Blake & John Yeoman: 50 Years of Children's Books](#) (until 4 February)

[Lucinda Rogers: On Gentrification](#) (until 25 March)

NOTES TO EDITORS

House of Illustration is the UK's only public gallery dedicated solely to illustration and graphic art. Founded by Sir Quentin Blake it opened in July 2014 in King's Cross, London. Its exhibition programme explores both historic and contemporary illustration and the work of defining and emerging illustrators, amplified by a vibrant programme of talks and events. A registered charity, House of Illustration supports and promotes new talent, commissions new work and has a pioneering learning programme delivered by professional illustrators. houseofillustration.org.uk

Enid Marx: The Pleasures of Pattern by Alan Powers is published by Lund Humphries on 5 March 2018. ISBN 978-1-84822-256-2. lundhumphries.com