
The
GALLERY
Downstairs

JULY 1987

78 33 60

The Early Days - Juke Boxes and 78s

During the 1950's the JUKE BOX was identified with youth - an ideal focus for new-found teenage independence, but its history stretches back to the last century.

In America in the 1890s phonograph parlours had coin-operated automatic phonographs which reproduced acoustically and had to be listened to through tubes or trumpets. They played only one tune.

By the late 1920s however, many phonographs were electronically amplified and offered a selection of tunes. Manufacture increased during the 1930s and the major companies emerged then; Wurlitzer, Seeking Rock-ola, Amir and Mills.

After the disruption of the war years new designs were elaborate and flamboyant; machines were designed for 45 rpm records and offered 100 selections.

The 1960s saw the growth of home entertainments, with a decline in the function of the juke box but a subsequent elevation of its status to a collectors item.

The juke boxes in the exhibition are from the collection of Tony Holmes of Sheffield.

The First Step in a New Direction

With a stereo system in many homes by the 1960s the design of record sleeves flourished. The old idea of a straight photograph of the performer was overthrown when Klaus Voorman used a drawn image for the Beatles 'Revolver'. ROGER DEAN followed with his watercolour/ink illustrations for Yes and Asia albums.

Sophisticated visual input continued through the 1970s in a dull conformist way until 1976 and the arrival of punk.

The Influence of Punk

The Anarchic quality of the new sound gave rise to a new low-tech graphic language using cut-out letters, found images, torn paper and felt-tip graffiti. JAMIE READ pioneered this style in his work for the Sex Pistols. Punk changed more than graphics however; it changed the whole structure of the music industry, breaking loose from the hold of the big companies.

The new independents allowed creative freedom and were consequently able to employ the very best new talent. JIM PHELAN and the independent Cherry Red Records began to specialise in the cheap and cheerful D.I.Y. principle. A classic example of a punk image is his cover for Burning Ambitions: A History of Punk, which not only reworks the design idea for the Sgt. Pepper album but does so by using found lettering and faces from newspapers and magazines.

A Wider Perspective

Music is a vital industry contributing substantially to Britain's economy. The visual imagery of pop-promos and record sleeves is a common language throughout the world. Growing demands on the music industry have helped to increase the status of graphic design and designers. In the 1970s a new sense of the intellectual tradition behind typography assisted by major exhibitions on themes such as Dada stimulated a search for a new vocabulary of colour, decoration and style. In the late 1970s BARNEY BUBBLES led the way, introducing a wider perspective to punk graphics, particularly ideas from European Modernism of the 1920s. A good example is his constructed logo for the Blockheads.

BARNEY BUBBLES incorporated highly innovative art references into his work and paid great attention to the positioning of type. Following his example three designers in particular; MALCOLM GARRETT, Peter Saville and NEVILLE BRODY used the record sleeve as a vehicle for exciting innovative typographic experiments.

Breaking New Ground

At the same time many designers recognised a challenge from Fine Art, and began to see less distinction between that and their own work. The illustrator Russell Mills produced a series of paintings for Brian Eno; ROSLAV SZAYBO uses his own and commissioned paintings for Elton John and Ian Hunter albums. Other designers are following this lead, indicating that this is the way forward into the 1990s.

This exhibition presents work by some of the most important contemporary British designers and photographers working in the record industry, and attempts by the inclusion of original artwork, preparatory drawings and other related material to provide a valuable insight into their working methods.

Acknowledgements

The information in this catalogue, is based on the introduction to 'Disc-cover', (an exhibition shown in Edinburgh in 1986), written by Catherine McDermott, Senior Lecturer in Design History at Kingston Polytechnic.

Barney Bubbles work kindly loaned by Rob O'Connor, Jake Riviera and Brian Griffin.

Suggested reading:

Street Style Catherine McDermott

Design Council

More Dark Than Shark Brian Eno

Faber & Faber

Pioneers of Modern Typography Herbert Spencer
Lund

GALLERY SHOWCASE

CLAIRE JOHNSON

Claire's work is not quite soft sculpture but it certainly has an appeal for adults as well as children. Her interlocking figures based on ideas from circuses, fairs and seaside scenes use the idea, and the impact, of repeat patterns in a highly original way.

MARY LONEY

The designs for Mary's ALICE DOLLS come from old photographs or from dolls patterns of the Victorian and Edwardian period. Their outfits are hand-made and their porcelain faces hand-painted. They all have names. Hannah, Louise, Beatrice, Rebecca - and the baby's name is Edmund!

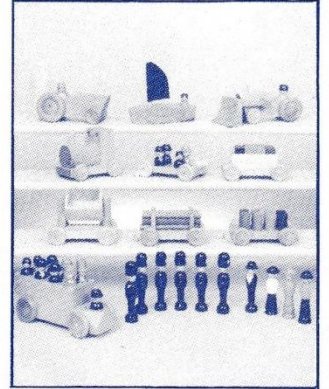


MAGIC TOYS

Magic Toys are hard-wearing, brightly coloured, lots of fun and 'low-tech'. Many of the designs date back to the last century and use very simple physical laws and mechanical devices to make them move. MAGIC TOYS also have a 'pocket-money' range of brooches and earrings.

ROBERT LONGSTAFF

This range of solid, wooden toys is produced mainly from English timber. All the toys are hand-made, hand painted, and finished with a clear varnish for hard wear and durability. The range includes 'sit-on' toys, 'pull-along' toys, some with removable figures, 'wobbly' animals, jig-names, badges and key-rings.



DAVID PLAGERSON

Hand-carved Noah's Ark sets based on German designs of the last century. A basic ark set in six different English woods has fourteen pairs of animals and a Mr. and Mrs. Noah. A more elaborate set, richly painted can have up to 36 pairs of animals including ostriches, llamas and ladybirds!

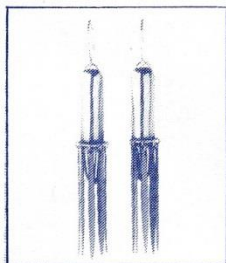
PUZZLEPLEX

Peter Stocken makes jig-saw puzzles with a difference. Using English and exotic woods including ebony, heraldic beasts, musical instruments and other motifs. Peter will undertake commissions for special items such as company logos - but beware; the puzzles may not be as simple as they look!

JEWELLERY SHOWCASE

JANET HINCHCLIFFE McCUTCHEON

Janet works in precious metals, principally silver. Her earrings are laminated silver and ebony, her brooches carved ebony and her necklaces ebony combined with textured silver and leather.



SUE STUDHOLME

Sue's work is delicate and very colourful. She specialises in fashion jewellery using a wide variety of materials; nylon, plastic, acetate, glass, silk and titanium.

