



Out of the Shadows: MacDonald Gill

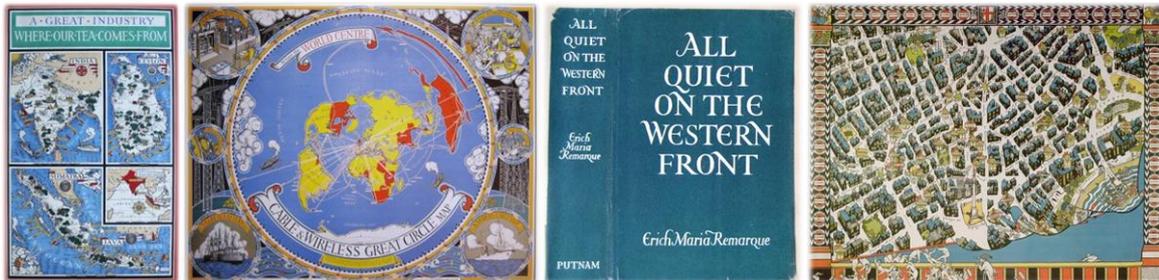
PM Gallery & House

20 September - 2 November 2013

First major London retrospective of the graphic art & design of MacDonald Gill

Glorious abundance of pictorial maps and rarely-seen original artwork, including posters, personal papers & artefacts unearthed at Gill's cottage in a remote corner of Sussex

A major, free retrospective exhibition of the work of influential designer MacDonald 'Max' Gill will open in London this autumn. The first London exhibition to display the full range of Gill's work, *Out of the Shadows: MacDonald Gill* will open at PM Gallery & House on 20 September, running until 2 November 2013. PM Gallery is the extension to one of Sir John Soane's great architectural treasures, Pitzhanger Manor, designed by Soane as a place to entertain his friends and display his collection of art and antiquities.



Inspired by the Arts & Crafts Movement, illustrator, letterer, architect and mural painter, MacDonald 'Max' Gill (1884-1947) produced a captivating and innovative range of graphic design in many forms, across four decades. Covering political and social issues and the fields of transport and communication, his work was celebrated in his lifetime but, unlike that of his elder brother, sculptor and typographer Eric Gill, it faded from view after his death.

Perhaps best known for the richly-coloured and highly-detailed, light-hearted pictorial maps he created for the London Underground, Gill's body of work also includes the design of the alphabet for standard military headstones (for the Imperial War Graves Commission); the procession map and title page for the official programme for the Coronation of King George VI; painted wind-dial panel maps commissioned by Edwin Lutyens; a new logo and posters for the General Post Office; and a huge painted map of the North Atlantic for the First Class Dining room on the Cunard liner *Queen Mary*.

As well as featuring a selection of London Underground maps, the exhibition will include an extensive collection of original Gill artwork, personal papers and other assorted material, which had lain, undisturbed for over 50 years, tucked away in chests, wardrobes and cupboards under the eaves of the remote Sussex cottage where Max lived with his second wife Priscilla, until his death in 1947.

Most of the material to be displayed was discovered by Priscilla's nephew, Andrew Johnston and his wife Angela, when they inherited her cottage in the 1980s. With Gill's great-niece and biographer Caroline Walker carefully documenting each new discovery, a comprehensive collection of his work emerged once more into the light of day. As the poster maps were unrolled, they revealed colours as fresh as the day they were printed. Gradually it became clear that the collection had great significance, not only because it included graphic work of the highest quality, unseen for over half a century, but also because it formed an important record of a vanished age.

Among the key exhibits are:

- ***Wonderground Map of London Town*** (1914) - the first of a series of seven humorous and colourful maps for the London Underground, which led to a worldwide resurgence in the art of decorative map-making.
- ***Highways of Empire*** (1927) - a traffic-stopper across the major cities of the Empire, this map launched the Empire Marketing Board's publicity campaign.
- ***GPO Mail Steamship Routes*** (1937) - part of a set of three communications maps, this shows the transatlantic journey of mail from pillar box to quayside.
- ***Tea Revives the World*** (1940) - a global view of the history and beneficial effects of Britain's national drink.
- ***Atlantic Charter*** (1942) - celebrating the Anglo-American treaty which led to the peacetime UN and the cementing of the 'special relationship', this poster features the signatures of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill, pasted in to the original artwork shown.

VISITOR INFORMATION

Out of the Shadows: MacDonald Gill

Dates: 20 September - 2 November 2013

Admission is free to all visitors.

PM Gallery & Pitzhanger Manor, Walpole Park, Mattock Lane, Ealing, London W5 5EQ

Opening Times: Tues-Fri 1-5pm; Sat 11am-5pm; Sundays 1-5pm.

Further visitor information: www.ealing.gov.uk/pmgalleryandhouse 020 8567 1227

Twitter: @soanesvilla

Travel: Trains & tube to Ealing Broadway. Buses 207, 65 & 83.

Notes to Editors:

1. Available for interview:

- **Caroline Walker** (MacDonald Gill biographer and curator, Gill's great-niece, currently continuing her research into the work of her great uncle and writing his biography).
- **Andrew Johnston** (curator, nephew of Gill's wife Priscilla & grandson of calligrapher Edward Johnston, designer of London Transport's typeface and roundel)
- **Angela Johnston** (MacDonald Gill archivist and curator, lives with husband Andrew in the Sussex cottage in which the archive was uncovered)
- **Dr Philippa Lyon** (curator & research fellow, University of Brighton).

2. The exhibition **private view** will take place on Thursday 19 September. For more information, please contact Michael Barrett at *The Press Office* on 020 8295 2424 or mb@thepressoffice.uk.com

3. **Max Gill biographical notes** available separately.

4. The exhibition ***Out of the Shadows: MacDonald Gill*** was presented by the University of Brighton's Faculty of Arts in summer 2011 and opened with a one-day symposium.

5. **Pitzhanger Manor** is both an historic venue and contemporary arts venue. PM Gallery is the 1940s extension to Pitzhanger, built on the site of Soane's mock Roman ruins. The largest exhibition space in West London, PM Gallery houses contemporary art exhibitions throughout the year. Exhibitions often run through from the Gallery into the House, with site-specific work that responds directly to the history and architecture of the House.

6. Pitzhanger Manor & PM Gallery are owned and run by **Ealing Council**. The council has five top priorities: securing public services, making Ealing cleaner, securing jobs and homes, making Ealing safer and delivering value for money. For more information please visit www.ealing.gov.uk or follow Ealing Council on Twitter www.twitter.com/ealingcouncil

Issued by *The Press Office*. For further information/images, contact **Michael Barrett** or **Kirsten Canning** on 020 8295 2424, 07813-558772 or mb@thepressoffice.uk.com

