

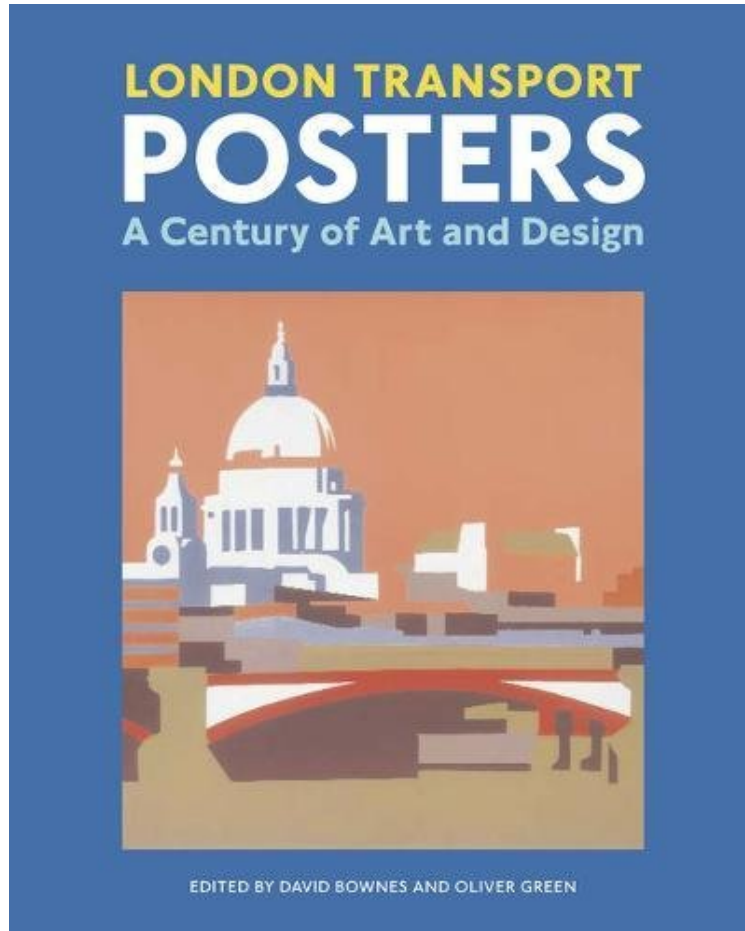
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London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design

From Brand: Lund Humphries : London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised [London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design](#):

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful. Exemplary Design for Art and CommerceBy Rob HardyWhen you think of patrons of the arts, you might think of the Medici family, or the Guggenheims, or maybe one of today's billionaires. You might not think of commercial or governmental enterprise. But in the twentieth century one particular London organization became a patron to a particular art form, and chances are that even if you have never been in London, you have seen the results. London Transport, in its own self interest, became a supporter of poster art, and the graphics that resulted have been hugely influential. [_London Transport Posters: A Century of Art and Design_](#) (published by Lund Humphries in association with London Transport Museum, and edited by David Bownes and Oliver Green, with eight other contributors) is a colorful presentation of truly great poster art. There are probably few advertisements that you'd spend money on and frame, but these handsome, informative, amusing, and persuasive posters have always generated enough enthusiasm that London Transport has had to print up extras not for the Tube

stations or bus stops, but also for people to take home. The book explains how this successful partnership between commerce and art came to be and has continued. Much of the credit for the patronage goes to the managing director of London Transport between the wars, Frank Pick, who came to the job in 1908. There were two great graphic steps Pick took to provide unity to the Underground system. One was to persuade calligrapher Edward Johnson to produce a distinctive set of letters that would be used for the Underground's signs and publicity. The other was to choose draughtsman Harry Beck to provide a tube map. Beck realized that within the tunnels, no one could actually see the layout, so he reduced them to something like a simple wiring diagram, disregarding scale and drawing all the lines with only verticals, horizontals, or 45 degree diagonals. The resulting map has been copied for subway systems all over the world. Lettering and maps are basically functional. Pick wanted to concentrate on the visual experience of traveling in the Underground, but as his biographer says, "Pick had no intention of turning the Underground into a picture gallery." Rather than being just art, Pick liked the idea of art with a function. "Art must come down from her pedestal and work for a living," he proclaimed in 1913. The change he wrought in poster design was phenomenal; before his efforts, posters had mostly been words, and though the typefaces might be exuberant, the idea of using pictures and a unifying design was revolutionary. Posters announced museum shows, demonstrated the functioning mechanisms of an escalator, or suggested a pleasant change of scene to the country. The poster artists developed a house style, with a reduction in detail and with dark outlines that contrasted with contemporary posters from the rest of Europe. Pick explained that "detail is sacrificed to an emphasis on dominant outline. The work becomes impressionist, because it is indeed essential that it should make an impression on the observer." People liked the artwork and paid attention to it. During World War One, copies of nostalgic posters showing "London Memories" were sent to the troops bearing the inscription "With the complements of the Underground." Though many of the pictures were idyllic views of natural scenes or villages, many were daring experiments in abstraction. Man Ray made one in 1938 that showed only two objects, the ring-and-bar logo of the Underground (without letters) and a ringed planet. The advertising was also an experiment in social engineering. When the Underground was going empty on off-peak hours, the artists produced designs reminding riders that the Tube could be used to get to football matches or the theater. When city fathers saw the advantage in having citizens live in open suburbs and commute to work downtown, posters were developed that bragged about neighborhoods accessible by Tube. There were posters reminding people of basic politeness, how to make way on the escalators, or how to make room on the cars: "Think of the others. A door obstructor is a selfish person." This is a handsome book with scores of colorful posters. It is remarkable that such a seemingly inartistic assignment (the posters, after all, have the apparently dull job of promoting public transport) should have gotten such varied and vivid responses. There were plenty of stupid and ugly urban ads in the twentieth century, but here is a demonstration that taking design seriously, and applying creativity and wit, can produce ads that are not only effective, but are handsome enough for people to want to see them on their own walls. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautiful book - brings back lovely memories! By Mountain Gorgeous book - brings back great memories of living in London and plastering my walls with TONS of postcards from the London Transport Museum. I plan to make a collage from the book - will probably need a 2nd on in order not to miss any! 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book, excellent condition! By George Higgins Like new! Great book, great gift! Really happy to have gotten this book for a gift! Will recommend to others.

London Transport Posters celebrates a century of outstanding graphic design commissioned by the Underground, London Transport, and its present-day successor, Transport for London. Drawing on newly researched sources in the archives of the London Transport Museum and Transport for London, the book discusses and illustrates the different styles and themes emerging from the posters over the last hundred years. It includes examples of over 250 posters from all periods and will be an invaluable reference book and visual resource for all those with an interest in 20th-century design.

'Every page of this book offers the reader images of the diversity of subject-matter and artistic style that have exemplified London Transport Posters over the last century... This is a book with wide appeal; it would be the ideal complement to a visit to the London Transport Museum for the general visitor, while offering a sound introduction to the subject for those seeking a deeper understanding of this important design phenomenon.' Cassone About the Author David Bownes is Senior Curator at London Transport Museum. His recent publications include *The Metropolitan Railway* (2005). Oliver Green is Head Curator at London Transport Museum and has written and lectured extensively on London Transport's design history. Jonathan Black is a Senior Research Fellow in History of Art at Dorich House Museum, Kingston University, with a special interest in early twentieth-century European art, cultural and military history. Emmanuelle Dirix is a design historian and associate lecturer at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London and the London College of Fashion. Claire Dobbin is an art historian and Project Curator at London Transport Museum. Catherine Flood is a Curator of Prints at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London with responsibility for the Museum's poster collection. Bex Lewis is an Honorary Research Fellow in History at the University of Winchester. Alan Powers is Professor of Architecture and Cultural History at the University of

Greenwich and has written extensively on twentieth-century British art and design. Paul Rennie is Head of Context in Graphic Design at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London. Brian Webb is a practising designer who, with his former agency Trickett and Webb, designed a number of posters for London Underground.