

Edward Bishop

Artist whose favourite subject was London

EDWARD BISHOP, who has died aged 94, was a familiar figure on London's art scene, and a former chairman of the Chelsea Arts Club.

His favourite subject, as befitted the president of the London Sketch Club, was the capital. In 1983 a critic described him as a romantic impressionist who had had a 30-year love affair with London — though his paintings often convey a feeling of loneliness.

The youngest of eight children, Edward Bishop was born in London on Nov 11 1902, the son of a carpenter and a dressmaker.

Leaving school during the First World War he began work with the Stoll Theatres in the West End. His life was transformed by seeing Nijinsky in the Diaghilev ballets at the Coliseum.

He began to design posters and publicity material, and became a protégé of the designer Leo Dowd. Soon he won a scholarship for the life class at the Central School of Art, and trained under Bernard Meninsky and F.W. Jackson.

In 1929 Unilever ran an open competition for an advertising campaign, which Bishop won. Subsequently he joined Lintas, Unilever's own advertising agency, where he worked until 1936. He then moved to another agency, S H Benson, as an art director, working for Kodak and Austin cars.

Having suffered as a child from rheumatic fever, Bishop was unfit for service in the Second World War. In 1941 he joined the Ministry of Information, as a designer of propaganda for the war effort. His material was at first concentrated on European countries, but later focused on Japan.

Bishop suffered terribly in



A cover by Bishop for *The Listener* (1958)

the Blitz, losing his mother, brother and sister in a single night. His own flat in Fetter Lane was also destroyed, together with all his paintings to that date. Then another bomb trapped him in Holborn Underground station; he was one of the few survivors, saved from asphyxiation because he had donned his gas mask just before the explosion.

After the war he went back to advertising, and at the same time developed a career as a professional painter. In 1950 he was elected to the Royal Society of British Artists, and 10 years later became a member of the New English Art Club, graduating to First

Keeper. As chairman of the Chelsea Arts Club in 1965 and 1966, he lobbied fervently for women members.

In 1958 Bishop was involved with the Treason Trial Defence Fund, which raised money to help Nelson Mandela in South Africa. At that time he also designed a number of covers for *The Listener*.

Since 1941 more than 80 of his paintings have been exhibited at the Academy Summer Exhibition. Bishop was cheerful and alert into old age, and continued to exhibit. He has a work in this year's show.

He married, in 1956, Celeste Radloff, who died in 1994; they had a son.



Bishop (1954): made a new beginning after losing all his paintings in the Blitz