

EDWARD BISHOP

**Edward Bishop, painter,
died on June 7 aged 94.
He was born on
November 11, 1902.**



EDWARD BISHOP was a prolific painter who played a prominent role in the bohemian British art world of the postwar years. He was chairman of the Chelsea Arts Club, president of the London Sketch Club, and the first keeper of the New English Art Club. During the war he had worked at the Ministry of Information designing propaganda material. Over the past five and a half decades more than 80 of his paintings have been exhibited at Royal Academy Summer Exhibitions.

Edward Bishop was the son of a carpenter and the youngest of eight children. His mother was a dressmaker. He left elementary school at 14, in the middle of First World War, to work with Stoll Theatres in the West End. There his outlook was transformed by hearing classical music for the first time and seeing the Diaghilev ballets, featuring Nijinsky.

As a result of this artistic awakening, he approached the Central School of Arts and Crafts and asked to be taught to draw. A year later he won a scholarship to the life class, and he was soon designing posters for Stoll Theatres. Meanwhile, at the Central, he was training under Bernard Meninsky, F. W. Jackson and Noël Rooke.

In 1929 Bishop entered and won one of the first open competitions for an advertising campaign, for Unilever, and was asked to join the advertising agency Lintas, which had the Unilever account. He remained there until 1936, when he moved to the S.H. Benson agency, where he worked on campaigns for clients such as Kodak and Austin cars.

It was during these years

that he became a keen photographer, winning a number of important competitions and rarely being seen without his favourite Leica camera. He also became a proficient woodcutter.

Having suffered from rheumatic fever as a child, he was unfit for active service in the war, but in 1941 he joined the Ministry of Information, where he was involved in designing propaganda.

During one night of the Blitz he lost his mother, his sister and one of his brothers. His flat in Fetter Lane was also destroyed, along with all of his completed paintings.

Bishop had shown his first picture at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition in 1941. But it was during the 1950s — a vibrant time for British art — that he really became active as an artist. He was elected to the Royal Society of British Artists

and made president of the London Sketch Club.

A series of his paintings captured the atmosphere in the famous Studio Club in Swallow Street, Piccadilly. His other canvases from this period included night scenes of London, many paintings of the Thames, and works on the theme of loneliness, whether in the city or in a desolate farmhouse — a subject to which he frequently returned in the course of his career.

In the late 1950s he designed a number of covers for *The Listener*. In 1958 he helped to organise the art auction for the Treason Defence Fund, which had been established to help the accused, including Nelson Mandela, in the South African treason trials.

In 1960 he was made a member of the New English Art Club; he was later appointed its first keeper, a post he held until 1990. He also served as chairman of the Chelsea Arts Club in 1965 and 1966, in which capacity he lobbied for the admission of women, and helped to arrange gala evenings in honour of distinguished women, including Dame Eva Turner, Joyce Grenfell and Elisabeth Frink.

He continued painting into his eighties, as well as encouraging other artists, and has a picture in the current Royal Academy Summer Exhibition. His wife, the Naïve painter Celeste Radloff, predeceased him. He is survived by one son.