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# BULLETIN

LEICESTER MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY

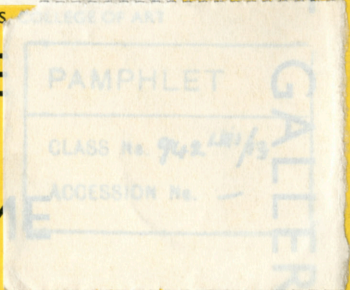


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DRAWING BY JOAN BATES

HOLIDAYS AT HOME  
 MID-DAY MUSIC  
 MUSEUM PROGRAMME

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## EXHIBITIONS OLD AND NEW 12

Make new friends and keep the old . . . we shall refrain from concluding the couplet. It was very nice to be able to come into a museum and see old friends in the same old case in the same old place, so that you could say to your son, or even your grandson, that you remembered when you were a boy being brought by your father to see that.

Unfortunately, times not only change, but also now with greatly increased means of communication such as the illustrated newspapers, the films and the radio, we are tending more and more to use our senses of perception in different ways. We, in the museum must not lag behind our public, for we are part of the community and must keep in tune with the whole.

Thus, some of our old and favourite exhibits have been removed for safety. But for compensation there are new friends and new ideas. We cannot always show these in the ways we should like, for materials and time and labour are all rationed. Yet as far as possible we are trying to maintain a passing pageant of exhibitions which reflect the mood of the moment.

One of the most popular consists of news photographs which each week are changed and kept up to date. In view of the scarcity of good maps, the display of these photographs is greatly enhanced by specially prepared maps secured from the Serial Map Service. At the moment the most dramatic front in the Soviet Union is displayed by Cyril J. Lane, who with specialised knowledge arising from his ability to read Russian and his pre-war visit to the country, has evolved an ingenious method of showing the various thrusts by means of movable symbols.

Many amateur gardeners have acknowledged their indebtedness to another new exhibit "Dig for Victory" which with its model allotment each week enables you to see "How Does Your Garden Grow?" Margaret Usher, the Museum horticultural expert takes care of this exhibition, keeping it up-to-date with notes as to tasks in the garden for each new month.

Now that the Ministry of Information topical exhibitions have been withdrawn from the Main Hall, J. W. Briggs, Keeper of the Department of Antiquities, has assembled a collection of old friends. These consist in the main of peasant costumes and embroideries, but there are also many fascinating and charming small Victorian objects which have been given recently to the bygone collections.



In the Art Gallery, the aim is to change the exhibition frequently in order to present as catholic a range as possible within the limits of financial resources and the types of exhibitions which are available. Recently, an exhibition of contemporary works aroused lively interest, and in connection with it a public discussion with Eric Newton, Art Critic, was a stimulating occasion. As a consequence of some opinions expressed then we have brought together a small collection of works from the permanent collection to illustrate some aspects of landscape painting, both traditional and contemporary.

The current exhibition in the Large Art Gallery presents a further selection of War Pictures by British Artists from those commissioned by the Ministry of Information. The value of this artistic record is emphasised by a few photographs of scenes in bombed London. These demonstrate that with a camera it is possible to make certain kinds of valuable records of an actual character, and occasionally, as in the picture of St. Pauls during the great fire, an emotional record which is highly inspiring. The individual artist, however, with his more colourful and plastic mediums, can give to his records an added quality of commentary by virtue of his personal reaction and his sensibility of selection, very much in the way that an expert war commentator can give more than the items of news.

Of especial local interest is the collection of Leicester scenes of devastation by Kenneth Holmes, which are exhibited now for the first time. There are nostalgic records of familiar landmarks which have either gone for ever or been changed beyond recognition. The raging fire at a well-known factory is shown with dramatic intensity, whilst there are a number of poignant scenes of more humble places, twisted and torn, clearly perceived and delicately rendered with extremely sensitive draughtsmanship. In times to come this collection will form an invaluable addition to an already distinguished tradition of watercolour records of the City of Leicester.

For the future, there are several promising exhibitions. In the autumn, works by W. R. Sickert, Five Polish Artists and the Warburg Institute's exhibition dealing with British Art and the Mediterranean. Later comes the Tate Gallery's Wartime Acquisitions, and for a short time in January the works of London Civil Defence Artists will be shown before the Annual Exhibition of the Leicester Society of Artists.