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Commercial Art

The Journal that Charted 20th Century Design

Ruth Artmonsky

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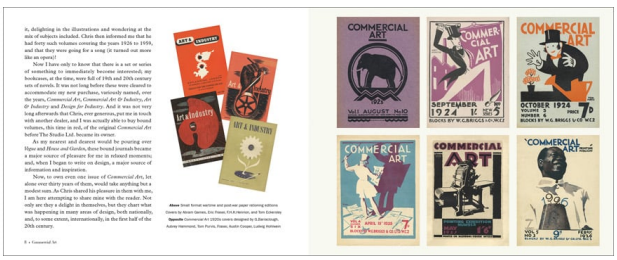
- Claimed to be the only British monthly magazine covering design, *Commercial Art* recounts the history of nearly 40 years, and its mirroring of British design over that period

"Anyone reading this who aspires to chronicle a segment of 20th-century Western design must have Artmonsky's modest but essential library of books. And while you are ordering, thank her for this invaluable detour from the fields of psychology and statistics."— **Printmag**

Commercial Art, with different titles over the years, claimed to be the only British monthly magazine covering design until the Council of Industrial Design began to publish *Design* in 1949. For most of its existence it was published by The Studio Ltd. whose founding family, the Holmes, were to be actively involved, from grandfather to grandsons. The Studio Ltd were already publishing art and design related magazines (*The Studio* from 1893 and *The Studio Decorative Yearbook* from 1906), when it decided to plunge into the vulgarity of 'commercial' art, buying up an existing magazine with that title in 1926. Most of the rest of the 1920s and into the '30s it concentrated on the graphic arts, but increasing in the late '30s its focus shifted to industrial design. The shift was acknowledged by title changes, first to *Commercial Art & Industry* and to *Art & Industry*.

In 1957, with death duty problems, the family were forced to sell to The Hulton Press. Although the Press made a brave effort to update the look and content of the magazine, with the arrival of *Design* and the turmoil of Fleet Street at the time, the magazine became unviable and was closed in 1959.

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