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pattern-making and for his ability to imbue his compositions with a sense of strangeness. This is seen in *The Bedstead*, a watercolour of 1939, in which a bedroom has a mix of patterning in the wall and floor coverings and a disquiet created by the blank white rectangle on the wall. That Ravilious was sensitive to the possibilities of the unusual element in what he saw before him is illustrated in a comment made by his wife Tirzah about the painting *Buscot Park, Berkshire*, of 1938: 'Eric found that it was very difficult to make a good drawing of an obviously beautiful house because if done in a straightforward manner it would be so dull. Fortunately the grass was being mown and he painted the various stripes of grass in the fore-ground and a storm was coming up behind in the sky'. The resultant watercolour has a strangeness created by the rhythm of the mown grass echoed in the cloud formations behind the house.

While today Ravilious is better known for his watercolours, as a young man he made his reputation as a wood-engraver and book illustrator. For example, he used wood-engravings to illustrate *The Twelve Moneths* [sic] by the Elizabethan poet and novelist Nicholas Breton, for the Golden Cockerel Press in 1927. Powers traces the development of Ravilious's wood-engraving technique, noting the influence of *manière ciblée*, a style of fifteenth-century German Renaissance metal engraving, in his use of dots and tonal gradation in *The Sussex Church* of 1925 (fig. 378). This was the year he was elected an associate of the Society of Wood-Engravers following his nomination by Paul Nash (1889–1946), who taught him at the Royal College of Art. Ravilious possessed a remarkable skill for describing a variety of different textures and for fine-cut lines combined with arresting images. His friend, the artist Edward Bawden, commented 'he never made the slightest mistake or showed the faintest indecision. His cutting was superb'. Ravilious also worked with colour lithography although not as extensively. It is noteworthy how the artist's printmaking and watercolour techniques in describing surface, texture and tone inform each other.

Some of the most interesting questions Powers wrestles with through his analysis of Ravilious's output is what 'Englishness' is, Ravilious's relationship to Modernism, and the division of his practice between art and design. For example, Powers considers the artist's relationship to Modernism believing that it was almost unnoticed by him 'as if in another room'. I am not completely convinced of this when I think of one of his most well-known watercolours, *Train Landscape*, of 1939. Here he changed the chalk figure of the Long Man of Wilmington in Sussex to the Westbury Horse, Wiltshire, thus making a commentary on the move from transport by horse to train. However, it is true that Ravilious did not adapt to changing times in the same way as Nash or John Piper (1903–92) did. Instead his singular vision continued to focus on the quotidian, which was a constant theme from his earliest drawings of a tea pot and a Blackburn monoplane drawn while at school. The point



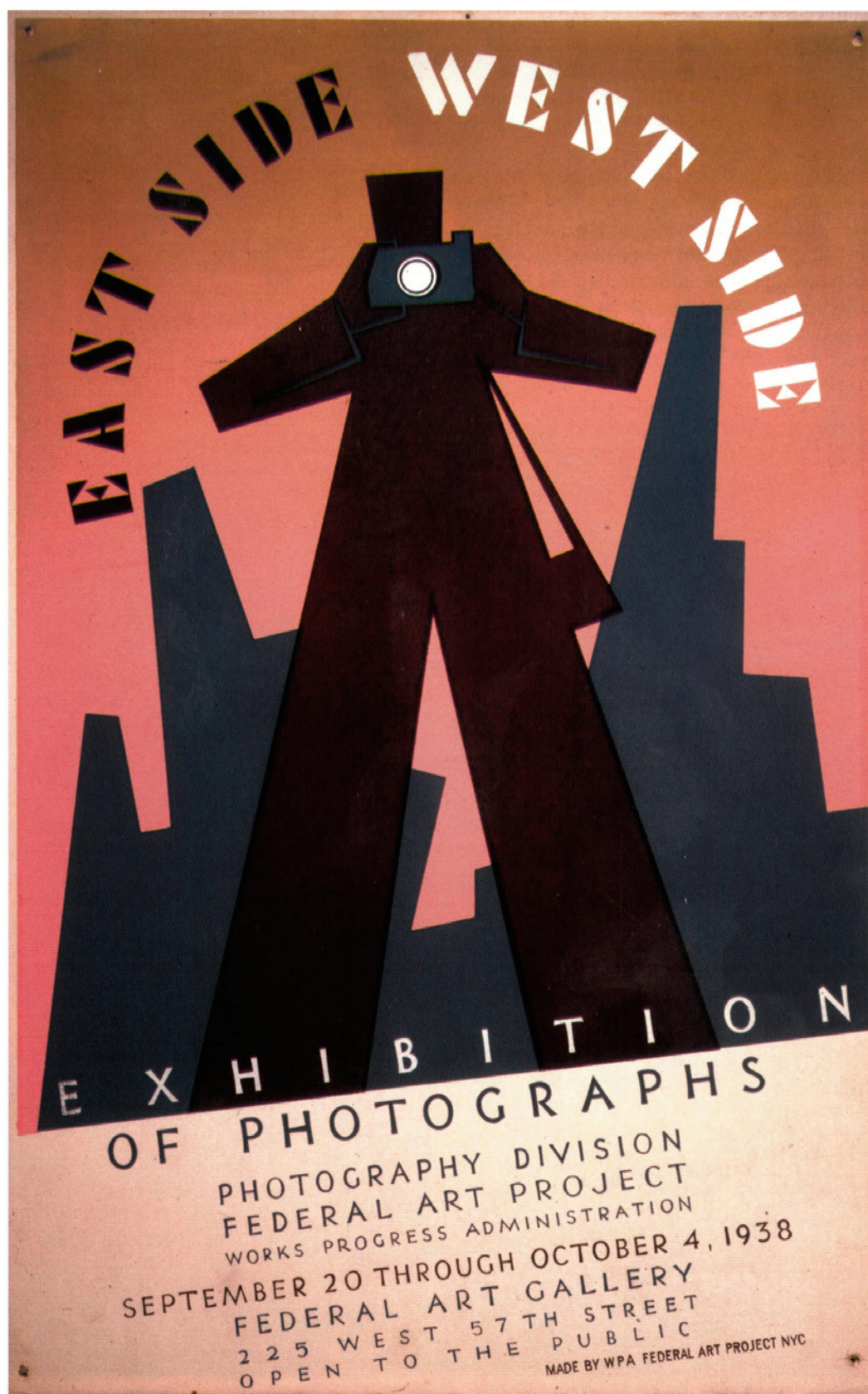
378. Eric Ravilious, *The Sussex Church*, 1925, wood-engraving, 113 x 128 mm.

at which his interest in the everyday turns into a surreal commentary on Modernism is *Ship's Screw on a Railway Truck*, of 1940, where a large yellow screw is placed on a trailer against a snowy landscape.

Powers's subtitle 'artist and designer' places a strong emphasis on the division of the artist's labour where others have taken for granted that Ravilious worked across many media. Powers is not the first to make this distinction. Sir Kenneth Clark also referred to Ravilious as an 'artist and designer' in his letter of condolence to Tirzah on the artist's death in 1942. The author, however, structures the whole book according to media, creating a different way to understand the oeuvre beyond biography.

Having had the privilege of being responsible for the Ravilious collection at the Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, I find this book a welcome addition to the literature on the artist. Powers champions the artist both as a significant figure in his generation and as one who has stood the test of time. What I enjoyed most about this very comprehensive and well-illustrated survey, is the way Powers brings together numerous written comments and remarks about Ravilious, which gives further insight into and appreciation of his work. It is very appropriate that Powers has acknowledged in his introduction the help and advice of Anne Ullman, Eric Ravilious's daughter, who has worked tirelessly to document her father's work and to keep track of its whereabouts. This publication will help to ensure that Ravilious's well-deserved reputation will continue to increase. PENNY JOHNSON

A HISTORY OF SCREENPRINTING is a recent publication covering an in-depth investigation into the early history of the screenprinting process (Guido Lengwiler, A



379. Anthony Velonis, *East Side West Side*, 1938, screenprint, 559 x 356 mm (Washington, DC, Library of Congress).

History of Screenprinting: How an Art Evolved into an Industry, Cincinnati, ST Media Group International, 2013, 485 pp., 830 col. ill., \$110). In the not too distant future, historians of commercial screenprinting will probably document an industry that was born and died within the twentieth century. In her catalogue to the 1970s printmaking exhibition 'The Mechanised Image' Pat Gilmour wrote 'it is as difficult to piece together the early history of screenprinting as to reconstruct fifteenth-century relief printing from the incunabula of the woodcut.' In the contemporary printmaking department of an art school it is all too easy to regard screenprinting simply as another art process alongside etching, stone lithography and relief printing and forget that this was a major segment of the commercial graphic printing industry. Until very recently screenprinting was used for posters, large banners, point of sale materials and short runs of any print needing bright or luminescent colour. In recent years these uses have been usurped by inkjet printing and screenprinting has metamorphosed into an industrial process for many things including car windscreens, kettle elements, diabetes sensors and CDs.

Based on intensive research, Lengwiler's remarkable book documents screenprinting's birth and first 50 years. The author has managed to piece together the previously undocumented early history of the process in a way that is both logical and persuasive. Where he is unsure of a development or step in the process, Lengwiler does not attempt to fill gaps with speculation. Instead, he presents the information, allowing readers to understand that they can either draw their own conclusions or realize there is a genuine gap in the knowledge. No doubt this is a timely volume – graphic screenprinting as a commercial process has faded away in the last fifteen years. When I first visited the Düsseldorf printing trade fair Drupa in 1995 there were two large halls dedicated to screenprinting, at my last visit to the same fair in 2012 only three companies showed any interest in the process. The opportunity to access any remaining data and collective memory will have totally disappeared in a few years time.

Earlier attempts to document the history of screenprinting frequently start either with Japanese hair stencils, French textile printing in Lyon or office stencil duplicating processes from the end of the nineteenth century. Lengwiler documents only those developments that he believes are the true origins of the process, therefore starting in the USA with banner (felt pennant) printing in New York and the Midwest, progressing through the growth of the Velvetone Company in San Francisco and leading naturally to the founding of the Selectasine company in the same city in 1915. In the past, most chroniclers of the history of screenprinting have been comfortable to start at this point, as there is much documentation of both Selectasine patents and company development. Lengwiler, however, fills those missing gaps from 1906 through to 1916 in a lavishly illustrated and logical progression. His narrative then

considers the development of the photostencil, the advent of automatic machinery and the influence on the printmaking world of the Workers Progress Administration and the work of Anthony Velonis (1911–97; see fig. 379 for WPA poster).

In particular the section on the early use of the bichromated photo stencil and the use of carbon tissue is a testament to the depth and quality of Lengwiler's research, with a comprehensive breakdown of its use both in the USA and the United Kingdom. Not only has the author managed to find the early patents filed by Sidney James Walters, who served as a technical officer for the British Air Ministry in 1917, but he also sourced two photographs of Walters dating from 1915 and 1939.

Further evidence of Lengwiler's diligent research is a section on the use of waterslide transfers or decals on ceramic and glass. It has always been an English assumption that these processes – particularly screenprinted ceramics – were developed using a release paper called Twincal in the early 1950s because there are UK patents filed by Johnson Matthey for screenprinting using a covercoat from this period. Lengwiler states, however, that the Vitachrome company in San Francisco were using decals in the 1940s, more than fifteen years before the UK patents were filed.

The only slight complaint I have is pure pedantry – the subtitle of the book is *How an Art Evolved into an Industry*, what Lengwiler more accurately describes is a commercial process that grew into an art. However this book is essential reading for anybody who has an interest in the history of a truly twentieth-century printing process. STEPHEN HOSKINS

POST-WORLD WAR II PRINT WORKSHOPS IN ROME. *Le Stamperie Artistiche di Roma: Incisioni e Litografie dal Dopoguerra ad Oggi*, the volume accompanying an exhibition at the Museo di San Salvatore in Lauro in Rome, was edited by Norberto G. Kuri, co-founder with Lorenzo Zichichi in 1968 of Il Cigno GG Edizioni, and the favourite printer of Marino Marini in his late career (exhibition catalogue, Rome, Musei di San Salvatore in Lauro, 25 July–28 September 2012, Rome, Il Cigno Galileo Galilei, 2012, 119 pp., 70 col. and 78 b. & w. ill., \$57.50). Do not be misled by the title. One will not find here any account of Renzo Romero's Grafica Romero or Walter and Elena Rossi's Stamperia 2RC, the activities of which are almost totally ignored in the long introductory essay on the history of printmaking. Their exclusion is accounted for by the fact that they no longer operate within the boundaries of the Italian capital. The Roman origin of this publication, explains the unexpected discussion of Carlo Labruzzi (1748–1817), Luigi Rossini (1790–1857), and Antoine Jean-Baptiste Thomas (1791–1833).

The most useful part of this compendium is provided by a series of brief essays on print workshops active in the last 50 years. An interview between Valentina Palozza and Professor Gerardo Lo Russo is devoted to the Scuola-Stam-