

## PRESS RELEASE

Bedford Gallery



Bedford Gallery, Castle Lane, Bedford

### **Abram Games** Maximum Meaning, Minimum Means

**Bedford Gallery, 6 June – 6 September 2009**

This exhibition celebrates the work of Abram Games, the graphic designer and poster artist who created many of the most memorable visual images of wartime and post-war Britain.

From the propaganda posters he designed as Official War Poster Artist during World War II, and his post-war advertisements for BEA/BOAC, London Transport and Guinness, to the Festival of Britain emblem and his pioneering screen identity for the BBC, Games created striking, often humorous images.

A gifted draughtsman, he applied his philosophy of 'maximum meaning, minimum means' to devising inventive combinations of text and images. Drawn from the Estate of Abram Games' archive and The Wellcome Trust Collection, this exhibition will trace the development of famous images such as his wartime recruitment posters – one of which, the ATS 'Blonde Bombshell' was withdrawn after a parliamentary debate deemed it 'too glamorous' – and the Festival of Britain emblem from the designer's first doodles, to the finished work. It will offer unique insights into Games' work as one of the most inspiring of the graphic artists, who once played such an important role in visual culture, and who was the British counterpart to Cassandre in France and John Heartfield in Germany.

Born in Whitechapel in 1914, Abram Games was educated at local schools in East London and won a place at St Martin's School of Art in 1930 only to drop out after two terms. Continuing his education at evening classes, he worked as an assistant to his photographer father and then as a studio boy in a commercial art studio. Games made his name during World War II as Official War Artist and enhanced his reputation in peacetime by designing many of the visual icons of post-war Britain from commemorative stamps for the 1948 Olympic Games, to his Financial Times posters and the BBC emblem. An inventor as well as a graphic artist, Abram Games died in 1996.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a series of lunchtime talks and family activities.

For more about Abram Games see:  
[www.abramgames.com](http://www.abramgames.com)

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## Notes to Editors

**Contact** Tom Perrett, Head of Collections & Exhibitions

**Images** Images can be provided on request

**Venue** Bedford Gallery, the new exhibition venue for Cecil Higgins Art Gallery and Bedford Museum, Castle Lane, Bedford

**Tel** 01234 353323/01234 211222

**Web** [www.befordmuseum.org](http://www.befordmuseum.org), [www.cecilhigginsartgallery.org](http://www.cecilhigginsartgallery.org)

**Open** Tuesday-Saturday 11am-5pm, Sunday 2pm-5pm  
Closed Mondays

**Admission** FREE