Poster - Careless Talk Costs Lives

Object: Poster

Place of origin: United Kingdom (made)

Date: 1940 (made)

Artist/Maker: Fougasse, born 1887 - died 1965 (artist)

Materials and Techniques: Colour lithograph

Credit Line: Gift of the American Friends of the V&A; Gift to the American Friends by Leslie, Judith and Gabri Schreyer and Alice Schreyer Batko

Museum number: E.1560-2004

Gallery location: Prints & Drawings Study Room, level C, case 1B, box LS3

Public access description

Fougasse, whose real name was Cyril Kenneth Bird, was a well-known cartoonist and editor of the magazine Punch when war broke out. He convinced the Government to use humour for wartime propaganda and offered his services free. He believed the sharing of a joke enabled a poster to persuade without causing resentment by appearing to preach. Fougasse designed a series of eight posters for the Careless Talk Costs Lives campaign. They were produced in a variety of formats both for indoor and outdoor display, and proved so popular that they were even reproduced on textiles.

Descriptive line

“You never know who's listening!”, Second World War cartoon poster warning against careless talk, designed by Fougasse, United Kingdom, 1940

Physical description

“You never know who's listening!” World War II propaganda poster. Illustration of two women seated side by side on a bench, possibly on a bus, talking to one another. Two rows of seats behind them are caricatures representing Hitler and Goering.

Dimensions

Height: 31.5 cm, Width: 20.2 cm

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URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O121567/careless-talk-costs-lives-poster-fougasse/