



NEW RELEASES

Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War

A true story, *Eric Ravilious* is as compelling and enigmatic as his art. Set against the dramatic wartime locations that inspired him, Kinmonth's film brings to life this brilliant but still grossly undervalued British artist. Caught in the crossfire of war 80 years ago, Ravilious's legacy largely sank without trace, until now. Made with the blessing of the Ravilious Estate, this first full-length feature documentary about Ravilious unfolds in his own words, through previously unseen private correspondence and rare archive film.

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On 2 September 1942, Eric Ravilious joined the crew of a military plane that was embarking on a search party for a missing aircraft off the coast of Iceland. Four days after that plane also failed to return, the RAF declared the crew lost in action, and Ravilious became the first official war artist to die in active service. Ravilious had been prolific and successful in his truncated career, but his reputation fell into obscurity in the decades following the war, and he has yet to earn the respect many feel he deserves. In *Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War*, he is described as 'a shared secret' by Alan Bennett, one of his most ardent admirers. 'Because his paintings are so accessible, I don't think he's thought to be a great artist,' Bennett suggests. 'I'm not sure he's properly estimated because he's so easy to like.'

Margy Kinmonth's documentary makes a good case for the richness of Ravilious's body of work, and for his status as a significant English artist. The interviewees that Kinmonth has canvassed for this film – ranging from famous fans like Bennett, Grayson Perry and Ai Weiwei to curators and family members – make intelligent observations about his artistry, highlighting the cross-hatching and stippling techniques that gave his watercolours their distinctive texture, or detecting ominous qualities behind the apparent 'cosiness' of his paintings. The second half of *Drawn to War* focuses on Ravilious's World War II experiences, and it's interesting to note how little he adapted his style to this new milieu. There's no immediate horror or propagandising on display here, and his paintings of battleships and submarines possess the same sense of serenity as his pastoral views of Sussex. These works are summed up in the film as 'profoundly serene, and profoundly disturbing.'

Kinmonth has a wealth of materials to draw from and she makes good use of the paintings, engravings and ceramics that the artist left behind, but her documentary is primarily structured around letters and diary entries. Perhaps her smartest filmmaking choice is to give Ravilious's wife and fellow artist Tirzah a near-equal share in the voiceover narration (spoken by Freddie Fox and Tamsin Greig), allowing her to emerge as an equally intriguing figure. Tirzah had to sacrifice her own artistic endeavours as she took care of their

often cash-strapped family, as well as putting up with her husband's long absences and numerous infidelities. One of the most memorable artworks shown in this film doesn't belong to Ravilious at all, but to Tirzah. Her engraving *The Wife* simply depicts a woman sitting up in bed, with her husband's side pointedly lying empty.

Philip Concannon, *Sight & Sound*, Summer 2022

ERIC RAVILIOUS DRAWN TO WAR

Directed by: Margy Kinmonth
Executive Producer: Maureen Murray
Produced by: Margy Kinmonth
Co-producers: David Trotter, David Verey
Written by: Margy Kinmonth
Script Consultant: David Trotter
Directors of Photography: Rob Goldie, Richard Ranken
Camera: Cosima Barzini, Patrick Duval, Tristan Goodley, Margy Kinmonth, ,
Film Editor: Gordon Mason
Original Score by: Edmund Jolliffe

Cast

Freddie Fox (*voice of Eric Ravilious*)
Tamsin Greig (*voice of Tirzah Garwood, 'Tush'*)
Lucas Mason (*voice of boy Ravilious*)
Neville Watchurst (*newsreel reader*)
Harriet Walter (*voice of Eva Hubback*)
Jeremy Irons (*voice of condolence official*)
Samuel West (*pilot*)
Robin Mackenzie (*Ravilious wood engravings artist*)
Rory Bosence, Vinny Bosence (*boy Ravilious*)
Ben Hutchinson (*drowning man*)

UK 2022
88 mins

A Dartmouth Films Release

NEW RELEASES

Queen of Glory

From 26 Aug

Official Competition

From 26 Aug

Wildhood

From Fri 2 Sep

Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War

From Mon 5 Sep

Bodies Bodies Bodies

From Fri 9 Sep

Crimes of the Future

From Fri 9 Sep

In Front of Your Face

From Fri 23 Sep

Flux Gourmet

From Fri 30 Sep

RE-RELEASES

Lost Highway

From Fri 2 Sep

Videodrome

From Sat 10 Sep

Jackie Brown

From Fri 16 Sep

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