

The Design Museum leaves out plenty of British icons

I went to visit the Design Museum in Kensington as a fan of great design. I had hoped to see many iconic UK designs, as well as great American and continental European ones, as we have offered much innovation and elegance to the world. The collection was disappointing.

The vehicle selection centred on the chassis of a Model T Ford, a huge picture of a VW Beetle, commentary on Porsche and a picture and comment on a large Citroen saloon of the 1960s. I did not see any images of the amazing Mini which revolutionised and popularised small cars, nor any hint of the beauty of an E type Jaguar. There were no Rolls Royces or Morris Minors. There seemed to be some kind of block on UK vehicles. There was a Vespa scooter but no Triumph or Norton motorcycle.

Also missing were famous designs from JCB, Dyson, the makers of the stylish steam locomotives of the inter war years, the hovercraft and many other UK greats. There was little attempt to set out Art Nouveau or Deco with some of their many UK manifeststions.

There was a whole floor of the Gallery given over to Peter Barber, the architect who used it to display prominently a couple of large posters asserting a version of Labour's housing policy with no right of reply for those who are equally concerned about providing enough decent housing but who think the route proposed would be damaging. I will deal with this in a future blog.