

2. Poplar Town Hall (now Bow House Business Centre), Bow Road/Fairfield Road, E3.

Date: 1938

Architect: Clifford Culpin

Sculptor: David Evans

Sculptures - There are five sculptures in low relief in Portland stone, in the form of panels on the front of the canopy over the main entrance to the building, showing various building trades and occupations.

1. Carpenter with saw, with girder of building behind [G].
2. Welder with oxy-acetylene apparatus and lighter steel girders behind [F].
3. Engineer with dividers, set-square, etc, kneeling on steel girders (signed David Evans Sc) [E].
4. Builder with trowel and stone block hoisted with crane, steel girders behind [D].
5. Builder with cement mixer, barrow and shovel, with steel girders behind [C].

These panels are set in a prominent and very visible position around the face of a curved canopy over the main entrance, facing onto the street. The building itself is of an unrelieved Modernistic style, but is also enlivened with contemporary mosaics on the south side. The iconography of the sculptures - in all probability decided by the architect - shows themes of workmen engaged in their trades which were common to the period, and is perhaps appropriate to a Town Hall built in a predominantly working class area of London. The appearance of steel girders as a backdrop in all the panels is perhaps again a reference to the high-rise aspirations of the period.

Sources:

Architects and Builders News, Nov 18 1938

Architects' Journal, Nov 17 1938

Builder, Nov 18 1938



A



C



B



D



E



F



G