



# **Pevsner: The Complete Broadcast Talks: Architecture and Art on Radio and Television, 1945-1977**

*Stephen Games*

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This book brings together the surviving texts of the 113 talks on art and architecture that we know of, given by the art historian Sir Nikolaus Pevsner on radio and television between 1945--1977. It includes the seven texts of the 1955 Reith Lectures in their original broadcast form, as well as lectures that Pevsner gave in German (for the BBC in London and RIAS in Berlin) and on the radio in New Zealand. These talks are important as an example of the attempt by the BBC in particular to provide intellectual programming for the mass population. The talks are important for what they reveal about changing tastes in the treatment of the arts as a broadcast topic, as well as offering a case study of the development of one particular historian's approach to a subject that was gaining ground in universities as a direct result of his popularisation of it. They show what topics were thought to be central to the artistic agenda in the mid-years of the last century, whether from an academic or journalistic perspective, and reveal the mode and manner of academic engagement with the public over the period. Forty-six of these talks were published in 2002, on the centenary of Pevsner's birth, in a trade edition. At the time, his reputation as an active force in architectural thinking had long been eclipsed and interest in him had waned. Since then, there has been a turn-around in tastes and Pevsner's role within his chosen field is now being actively studied and discussed by a new generation for whom he is central to an understanding of the 20th century. There is therefore a real need for this book. In addition to containing twice the number of talks as the previous volume, it is supplemented with explanatory introductions, footnotes and citations. It also reveals, as far as this is possible, alternative versions of Pevsner's texts, as they appeared at different stages in the original production process. As such, this edition can be relied on by academics as scholarly and

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