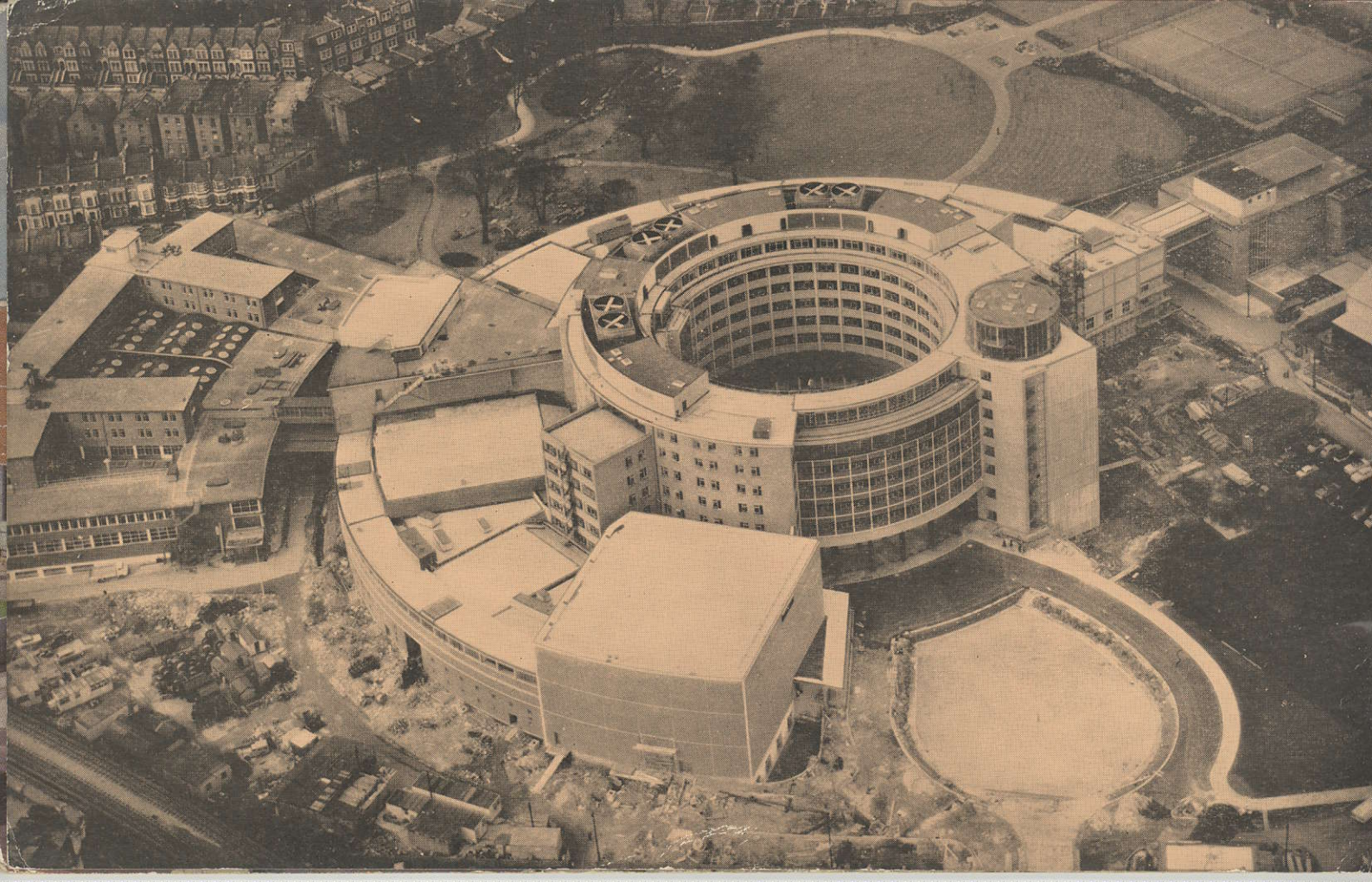


BBC TELEVISION CENTRE





THE BBC TELEVISION CENTRE

THE BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION

The Television Centre . . .



... for Britain and the world

THE BBC TELEVISION CENTRE, opened in June 1960, is the hub of Britain's national television network. It houses the world's senior television service in the most up-to-date, self-contained broadcasting centre in Europe—the first in Britain to be designed specifically for television. Within its studios are produced programmes not only for the BBC's own network, but also for use in many parts of the world: BBC television material is exported to more than seventy countries. The Television Centre has been

The Main Entrance by night

designed to meet not only the needs of today, but of the future too; it is equipped to meet possible future developments such as colour television and transmissions by 625-line definition. Meantime, the Centre is already the western terminal of a vast complex of vision circuits that span Europe, with Eurovision in the west of the continent and Intervision beyond. Every year, the Centre is visited by television executives from broadcasting organizations throughout the world, and more and more it is becoming a venue for international assemblies concerned with the progress of television.

Its significance lies largely in its extensive equipment for production by electronic methods. Apart



from programmes produced in the studios, the Centre houses equipment for the transmission of films and apparatus which enables programmes to be recorded and reproduced at a later time.

The Centre occupies a site of $13\frac{1}{2}$ acres (5.4 hectares), located roughly mid-way between Westminster and London Airport. Its main feature is an imposing circular building, containing studios and offices, and from this radiate a scenery block, a restaurant block, and—now under construction—an 'East Block' planned to accommodate television talks production and topical film handling, as well as engineering and house-service maintenance workshops and stores. The final development of the whole site will be a 'tail' or spur at the northern end.

Beyond a colonnade flanking the front entrance is a central court, dominated by a fountain with an obelisk

The Centre Court

40 ft (11.5 m) high and this is surmounted by a gilded bronze figure of Helios, the all-seeing Sun God of Greek mythology. Two reclining bronze figures over the pool of the fountain represent Sound and Vision. The sculptor is T. B. Huxley-Jones.

In the main entrance hall there is an abstract mosaic mural designed by John Piper.

The Main Block

The Main Block of seven stories rises 110 ft (33 m), is 500 ft (150 m) in diameter, and covers an area nearly twice the size of that occupied by St. Paul's Cathedral. There are about four hundred offices, providing accommodation for nearly three thousand people with dressing rooms for between five and six hundred artists.

Four production studios and a programme presentation area have so far been brought into operation.

From the seventh floor, there is a wide panoramic



view stretching the length and breadth of London. To the north-east, on a clear day, the area of Alexandra Palace, where BBC Television began in 1936, can be seen and—to the south-east—the lofty aerial at Crystal Palace, the biggest of the BBC transmitters. Through Crystal Palace and the twenty-nine other television transmitting stations of the BBC the television service reaches 99 per cent of the population of the United Kingdom.

Connecting the Centre's seven floors, the main staircase with its cantilevered support is one of the architectural features of the building. The sixth floor includes a direction suite and conference rooms, and the fifth, a script library. There are production offices on several floors.

The presentation suite on the fourth floor is a focal point of the entire television service. It has a Central Control Room, which handles programme contribu-

tions from all sources, including the BBC regions, the news centre at Alexandra Palace (later to be transferred to the spur), outside broadcasts, and automatic studios such as the one at Westminster which provides immediate facilities for reporting on Parliament. The presentation suite incorporates a small studio for announcements and interviews.

There is an International Control Room which has already handled programmes from all European capitals, and will be an important link when television communication by satellite is established. Elsewhere in the Centre a room has been specially fitted out as an international commentary area, in which commentators from overseas can watch important events being televised in this country and can add their own descriptions in their own languages to audiences hundreds and even thousands of miles away.

A Central Apparatus Room on the third floor is the technical nerve-centre of the network, dealing with the origination, assembly, and distribution of television programmes.

The Main Entrance Hall



BBC Publication,
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35 Fleet Street,
LONDON W. 1.

PREVIEW 1

PREVIEW 2

PREVIEW 3

Music and gramophone libraries in the Centre have vast resources and so have the third floor areas devoted to wardrobe, make-up rooms, wig-making, laundry and so on. The wardrobe holds in stock some 16,000 items.

The bigger production studios in Television Centre have observation rooms from which it is possible to watch what is happening in the studios without interfering with rehearsals or productions. There are similar observation places adjacent to the studio control rooms and here again, by quietly watching the work of the producer and his team, the onlooker gets an exciting glimpse through the observation windows of what is going on behind the scenes of television.

Accommodation for artists on the ground floor and in the basement includes dressing rooms with all

possible comfort and facilities, green rooms, make-up and hairdressing salons and showers, and these areas are so arranged as to give easy access to the studios and so contribute to the general streamlining of production. In the basement are viewing rooms, a photographic suite, a band practice room and a large semi-automatic telephone exchange.

The Studios

Four of the seven production studios are now in use.

Studio 3, for general purposes, and **Studio 4**, for light entertainment, music and drama, are each 100 ft × 80 ft × 40 ft high (30 m × 23 m × 13.5 m).

Studio 2, for general purposes, and **Studio 5**, specially designed and serviced for schools programmes, are each 70 feet × 50 feet × 33 feet high (21 m × 15 m × 10 m).

The other three studios will be brought into operation as they become equipped and of these, **Studio 1**



will be the biggest in the Centre, measuring 108 ft × 100 ft × 54 ft high (33 m × 30 m × 16.5 m). It is intended for light entertainment and music programmes and will be able to accommodate an audience of six hundred.

Studio 6, for general purposes, will be the same size as Studios 3 and 4.

Studio 7, for talks and discussion programmes, will be the same size as Studios 2 and 5.

In addition to these studios in the Centre itself, there are three others in nearby Lime Grove, as well as the BBC's Television Theatre at Shepherds Bush.

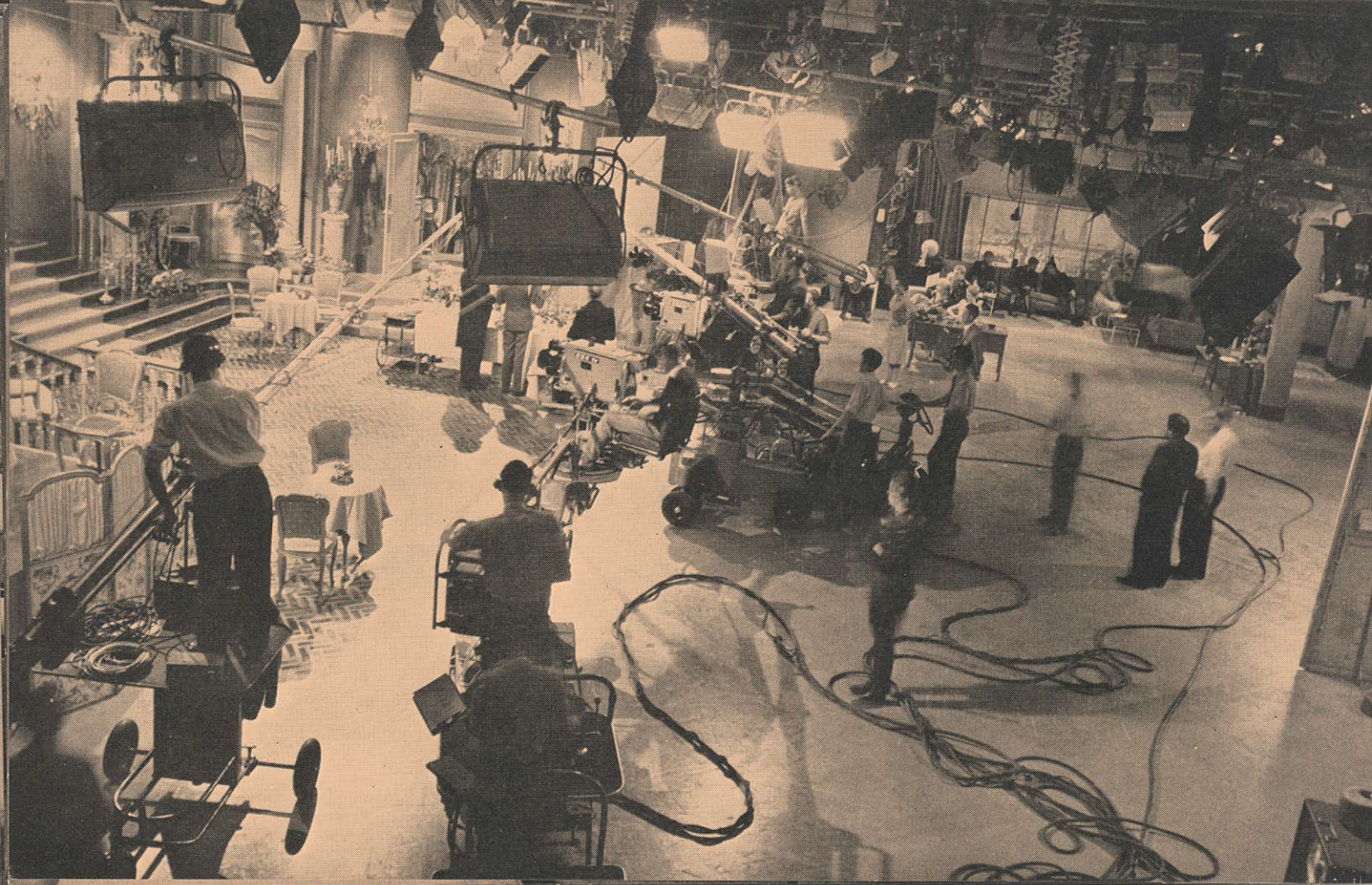
Scenery and Restaurant Blocks

The Restaurant Block, where staff and artists can

choose between waitress service and self-service cafeteria, overlooks its own garden, beyond which are the spreading trees and extensive lawns of a municipal park.

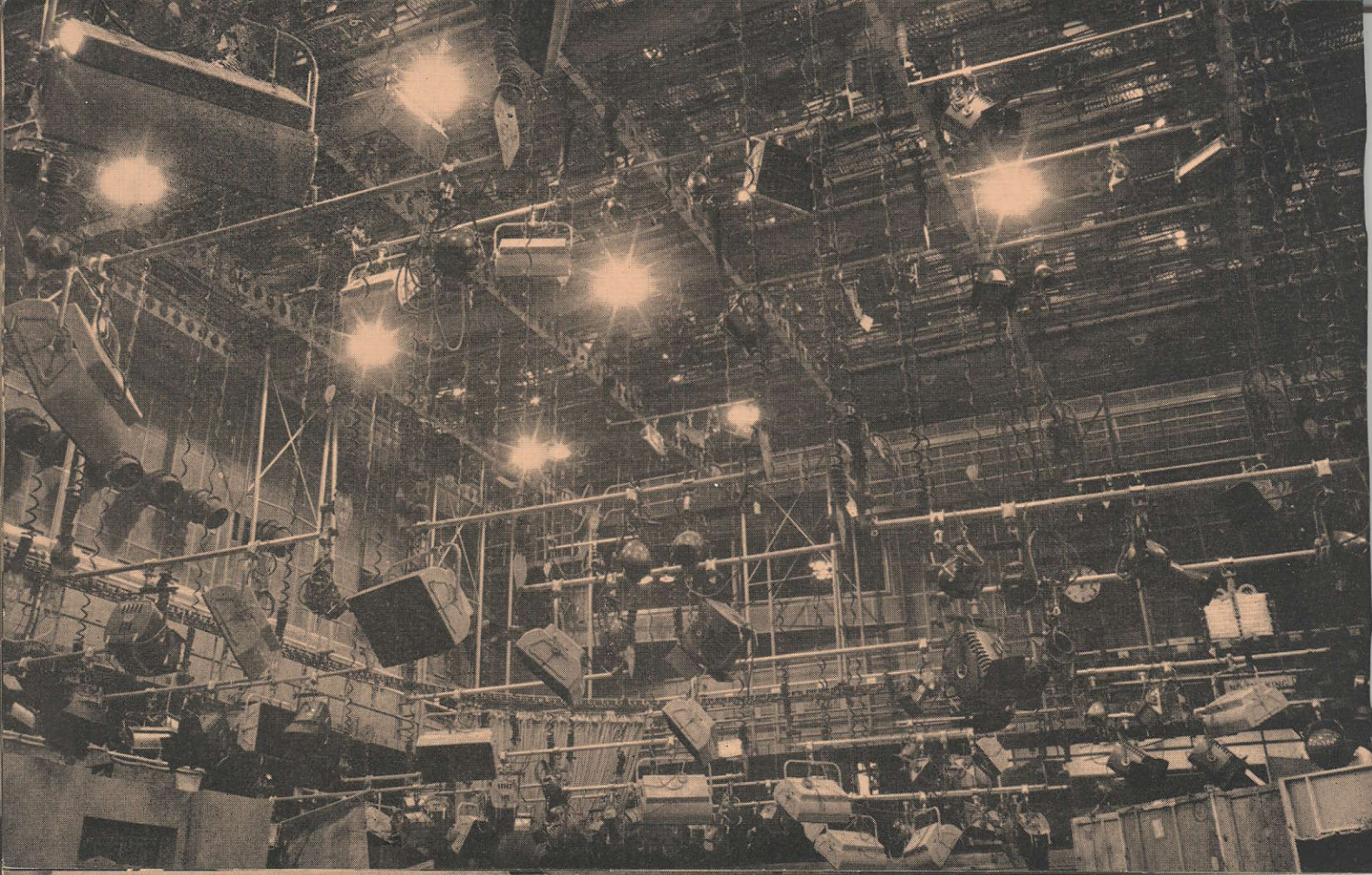
The Scenery Block, covering nearly an acre, accommodates the Design Department. Here the scenery, settings, and properties are made and supplied for television programmes. Completed scenery is assembled in a setting area from which it is moved either into a scenery runway, which has direct access to all seven studios, or into vans for conveyance to outlying studios. In the lofty scenic artists studio, 8,000 individual settings and 370 backcloths are completed annually. There is storage space in the scenery block for 4,000 scenic items, 5,000 pieces of furniture and 100,000 small properties.

Star Dressing Room



BBC Television began on 2 November 1936. Since then the initials BBC tv have come to have a special meaning to the world at large. BBC television was the first in the field. Today its resources are greater than those of any other television service. Its programmes represent all that is most modern in television thought. BBC television is a public service. Its aim is to make good programmes popular, and popular programmes good. Its only concern is the viewer.

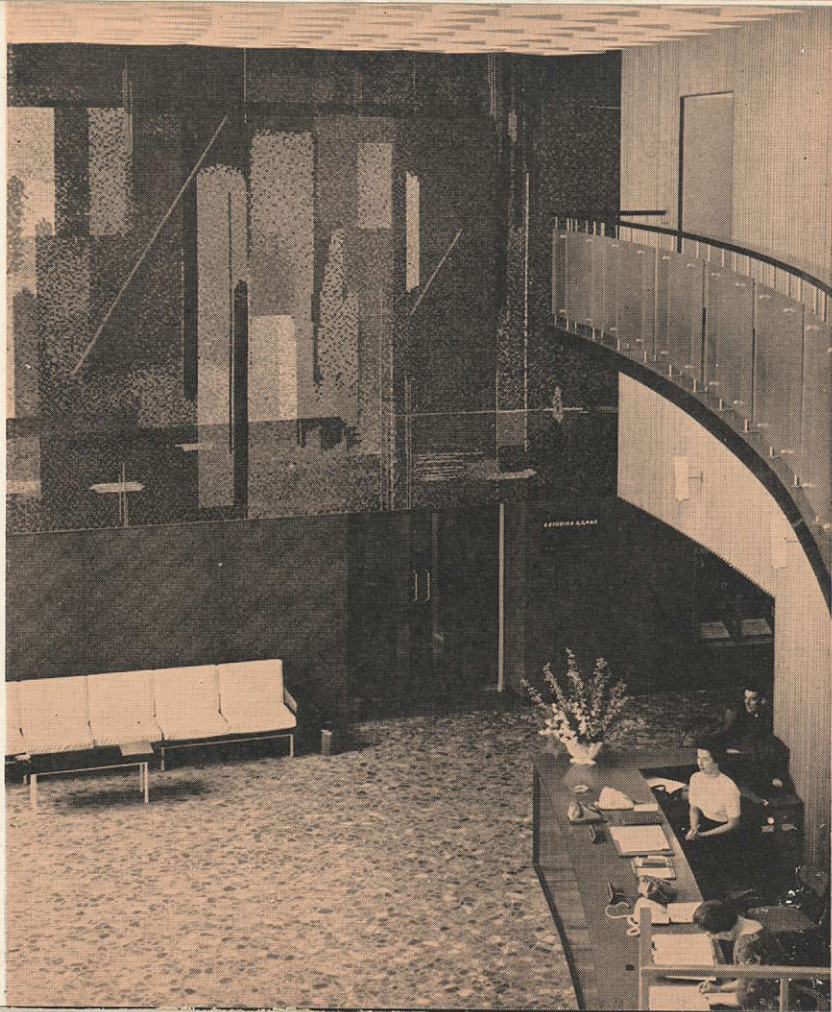
A rehearsal in Studio 3



Lighting in Studio 4

*and (right) Main Reception showing
the John Piper mural*

*overleaf:
Corner of the Properties Store*





Radio Times

Radio Times gives full details of the whole week's programmes in BBC Television and Sound, with articles, notes, and pictures about each day's outstanding broadcasts. From newsagents, every Thursday, price 5d. Annual subscription: inland 35s. od., overseas 33s. 6d., and pro rata.

The Listener

and
BBC Television Review

The Listener and BBC Television Review provides stimulating and informative comment on current affairs, literature, science, and the arts. It includes talks broadcast in BBC-tv and Sound. From newsagents, every Thursday, price 6d. Annual subscription: inland 39s. od., overseas 37s. od., and pro rata.

Further details of the above journals and of books and pamphlets connected with BBC Television and Sound broadcasts can be obtained from **BBC PUBLICATIONS, 35 Marylebone High Street, London, W.1.**

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BBC TV

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WINDMILL RECORDS