

Paul Helms, who began his artistic career as a simple lithographer, is one of those commercial artists, growing ever rarer to-day, who always devoted much time and attention to the study of nature and its forms and who still draw their best inspiration from observation of living nature. His early studies, reproduced here, reveal his keen powers of observation and have a finish which could only be achieved by an artist with rare talent for drawing. The knowledge of nature's rich storehouse of form which they display is properly recorded in the form language of commercial art, working with the greatest economy of means. Helms avoids all artificial distortion, never does violence to organic forms and has a convincing, fresh naturalness which is too often lacking in graphic propaganda to-day,

Wood-cuts for the  
cigarette firm of Reemtsma, Hamburg



although in its apparent inevitability it is one of the most effective methods possible. Helms usually resorts to the wood-cut when confronted by tasks of this kind. His work in this technique shows great manual dexterity, accuracy and precision and in spite of all simplicity, it has a pictorial quality at once clear and appealing. The rich play of line and the finely-balanced chiaroscuro lend these cuts that power of conviction which proves what charm and value the wood-cut has when applied to certain aspects of advertising. Many unused possibilities are latent here and our advertising men should not let them slumber. If strictly graphic propaganda comes into question, as in the case of press advertising, Helms consciously concentrates upon strong contrasts, strictly to the point, where as in the case of wood-cuts to be used for books or illustrations he modifies the

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