

ISSUE 102 | SPRING 2018

JOURNAL

CHARLES
RENNIE
MACKINTOSH
SOCIETY™

MACKINTOSH
M150

CELEBRATORY ISSUE: 150 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH, 1868–1928



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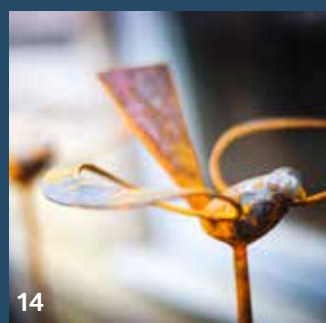
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Front cover: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Harvest Moon*, 1892, Glasgow School of Art

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Welcome

It has been an extremely busy start to the year, with another amazing **Celtic Connections** programme. Over January and February we had over 3000 people attend 10 fabulous concerts at Mackintosh Queen's Cross including Ricky Ross (Deacon Blue), Findlay Napier, Eddi Reader, Mandolin Orange and others.

I would like to thank all the staff and volunteers who helped us make the Celtic Connections concerts a great success. We really appreciate your support.

This year we are delighted to have two new posts, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, as part of our new venture with The Willow Tea Rooms Trust. Alice McBride and Jade Sturrock have joined our team as our Mackintosh Volunteer Coordinators. They have started a new volunteer programme, which will ensure we provide an excellent customer-facing service at No. 215 Sauchiehall Street, adjacent to the restored tea rooms.

To mark the 150th anniversary of the birth of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, **Mackintosh 150**, a year-long festival is being co-ordinated by all the Mackintosh heritage partners, to celebrate the legacy and creative genius of Glasgow's great cultural icon.

Highlights include a major new Mackintosh exhibition at Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum, a programme of events at The Lighthouse and at Queen's Cross, as well as the re-opening of Mackintosh at the Willow, Miss Cranston's original Tea Rooms in Sauchiehall Street. The Glasgow School of Art, The Hunterian at the University of Glasgow, House for an Art Lover and the new V&A Dundee will all play host to dedicated event and exhibition programmes with activities to inspire more young people to take an interest in art and design and to promote the unique portfolio to visitors and tourists.

Mackintosh 150 takes place as multi-million pound investment in Mackintosh's built heritage continues at The Glasgow School of Art, The Hill House in Helensburgh and the Sauchiehall Street Tea Rooms, while 2018 will also see restoration projects, such as the Oak Room at V&A Dundee, all designed to safeguard the Mackintosh legacy for future generations.

At Queen's Cross one of our highlights this summer is **Museum of the Moon**, a touring artwork by UK artist Luke Jerram. This enormous and detailed replica of the lunar surface, measuring seven metres in diameter, will be installed in Queen's Cross and form the centre of an exciting programme of events – a spectacular, must-see if you are in Glasgow this summer!

On Mackintosh's birthday, Thursday 7 June we are hosting a special evening event, **Mackintosh under the Moon**. This will lead into our AGM weekend, which will include a tour of the restored **Tea Rooms**, a private view of the new Mackintosh exhibition at **Kelvingrove** and a special visit to **Windyhill** on the Sunday. Full details of the weekend programme are included with the Journal.

Since the last Journal we are pleased to announce that negotiations are now progressing with Ruchill Kelvinside Parish Church regarding the purchase of the Communion Table and the two Alms Dishes at Queen's Cross. A **Furniture Appeal** has now been setup, details of which are enclosed. We very much appreciate your support and hope you will be able to contribute to this very important campaign.

Best wishes

Stuart Robertson FRSA
Director



Bird and bee detail on the
Alms Dish Stand

Hon President's Address



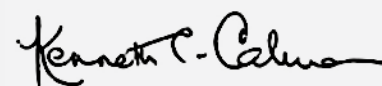
It is a privilege to be able to contribute to the CRM Society at such a special time. The 150th anniversary of Mackintosh's birth brings another opportunity to reflect on his legacy and its impact on all of us. It also presents a suitable moment to review the work of our Society, its tremendous achievements and its current direction. The real focus is on the future and what we must put in place now to do our very best to build on the successes to date.

At the heart of the 150th celebrations is the recognition that this special year is all about people. It's about our visitors to Mackintosh Queen's Cross; it's about our 1,000 supportive members and patrons; our staff and colleagues who dedicate their professional skills and brilliance to the Mackintosh buildings and collections; our local community in Maryhill and the wider Mackintosh community nationally and

internationally. It's a time to thank our funders and sponsors. It's a time to thank you – and I do.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh has touched our lives. As members, we share that pleasure together. As a Society, it is our vision, responsibility and desire to continue to protect, preserve and promote Glasgow's Mackintosh heritage for the enjoyment of future generations. The 150th anniversary is a perfect moment to celebrate our world-famous architect, designer and artist and also the right moment to pledge our continued interest in and support for our CRM Society.

Sir Kenneth Calman
Hon President

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Kenneth C. Calman'.

Editor's Note

Anniversaries – the accumulation of years to form neat round figures – mean nothing in themselves. Even as a prompt for reflection, they can be ill-timed. The 150th anniversary of Mackintosh's birth is, however, a year of re-birth and hope for the future. Out of the ashes of the fire-damaged areas of The Glasgow School of Art, we are seeing emerge a careful and considered reinstatement. At the site of Miss Cranston's original Willow Tea Rooms building, tea, cakes, renewal and interpretative facilities will bring it to life. Even The Hill House, which has suffered from water penetration in its interior for some time, seems to be about to be brought in from the rain, with a funding campaign underway, and a programme of repair soon to be decided upon. Despite several Mackintosh buildings still facing an undecided future, the 150th anniversary is far more hopeful than the situation might have been a short time ago.

The Society's own continued investment in Queen's Cross is now joined by far wider investment. Investment in building fabric, of course, but also in scholarship, in investigation, in craftsmanship,

and – for those with a more business-based outlook – investment with a clear tourism return. Our authors in this edition report on progress, survey scholarship, explore Mackintosh's work and the Mackintoshes' creative relationship, even examine the philosophy of reconstruction, not to mention a new attempt at reconstruction in literary terms. How busy things presently are can be gathered by the fact that our usual excellent editor, Alison Brown, was temporarily not available to work on the Society's Journal, concentrating on the major exhibition at Kelvingrove, Charles Rennie Mackintosh – Making the Glasgow Style.

Anniversaries are soon over, and it is quite beyond us to guess where we may be with the passage of another 50 years. And it has to be admitted that much of the present investment in Mackintosh has come as a result of disaster and material loss and of water ingress which we all wish had never happened. Yet, we do now know the strength of public feeling. We will have a Mackintosh legacy, and it will be a legacy which, for the most part, has been acknowledged by funders and decision makers and stands a very good chance of making it in reasonable shape to the next anniversary. There is much cause for celebration.

And something else to be gained is the skill-based learning already won and to be won during restoration. Techniques and methods are being re-called, trialled and explored, and scholarship is at work to record. Much of it, from managing cement-

based harl to the malfunctioning of sandstone based sub-strata, or from correctly finishing furniture to understanding the importance of authentic experience, is highly transferrable and ought not to be forgotten. Our watch, then, must be to press that this is published, and to flag-up where it may be found.

Greatly helped by the exacting and excellent Journal team, it has been a delight to stand-in briefly for Alison, and to have a vantage point at the heart of vibrant and meaningful work carried out in this anniversary year. As if by magic, the various projects relating to Mackintosh's important architectural work have moved centre-stage in this landmark year, elevating Glasgow and the west of Scotland to a leader in conservation and far-sighted heritage planning. Perhaps the important thing is that some of this work would have had to happen anyway, but the anniversary allows us to place them in the wider context of celebration which lends further weight and recognition.

On a personal note, this has also had special significance for me as a one-time student guide at The Glasgow School of Art, helping people to understand and enjoy the pre-fire Library, and also as property manager at The Hill House some time ago. It is great to see that people care, and heartening to see that Glasgow cares. At least in this anniversary year, we could remould Glasgow's great slogan to say Mackintosh Makes Glasgow.

Charlotte Rostek, Guest Editor

Professor Pamela Robertson reflects on future-proofing Mackintosh's built heritage.

Mackintosh Architecture 1968–2018

Pamela Robertson, Professor Emerita of Mackintosh Studies and Professorial Research Fellow, University of Glasgow, looks at the many achievements in protecting and promoting Mackintosh's built heritage over the last 50 years and calls for strategic and Glasgow City Council-led support for continued scholarship and careful stewardship of this precious heritage.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh centenary exhibition, 1968
© The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, 2018



The major event of Mackintosh's centenary in 1968 was the revelatory exhibition held in Edinburgh, at the then Royal Scottish Museum, organised by the Scottish Arts Council in association with the Edinburgh Festival Society. Curated by Andrew McLaren Young of the University of Glasgow, the exhibition provided the first comprehensive, scholarly overview of Mackintosh's career as an architect, alongside his output as a designer and artist. All phases of his career – student designs, major projects, the late Chelsea studios, were represented through original drawings supported by specially commissioned models, film, and photographs. Despite the critical acclaim secured by the exhibition and the scholarship it stimulated, over the next few years Mackintosh's built heritage in Glasgow was at risk. Motorway developments proposed by the City Council threatened the fabric and catchment areas of Martyrs Public School, Scotland Street Public School, Queen's Cross Church and Ruchill Church Halls. Out of these threats emerged the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society which campaigned tirelessly to protect and promote Mackintosh's architecture. Its efforts were successful then and a primary aim of the Society continues to be to 'support the conservation, preservation, maintenance and improvement of buildings and artefacts designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his contemporaries'. Now, as we celebrate Mackintosh's 150th anniversary year, what progress has been made with the built heritage in the intervening 50 years?

There are major positives. Key buildings are now publicly accessible, including 6 Florentine Terrace (The Mackintosh House), the Glasgow Art Club, Glasgow Herald building (The Lighthouse), the Glasgow School of Art, The Hill House, Queen's Cross Church, Scotland Street Public School, the Willow Tearooms and 78 Derngate. Initiatives are underway to secure the future of the Helensburgh Conservative Club. Kelvin Hall offers the possibility of a world-class Mackintosh Centre. Exhibitions, notably Andy MacMillan's exhibition of drawings at the Architectural Association in 1981, the collection-based series of exhibitions of drawings and designs at The Hunterian in the 1980s and 90s, the 1996–7 Glasgow Museums' retrospective, and the 2014–15 Mackintosh Architecture exhibition at The Hunterian and the RIBA, have presented the architecture through drawings, models and film. Some further understanding of Mackintosh's House for an Art Lover project was achieved through its modern construction, inspired by Mackintosh's portfolio drawings. The Society has contributed to increasing awareness of Mackintosh's architectural legacy and its context through ambitious international conferences in 1983 and 1990, publications, lectures, members' tours to Europe and the US, walking tours, and monitoring the state of the built heritage through various committees, including its own Buildings and Interiors Group and the informal association of collections and buildings, the Mackintosh Heritage Liaison Group.¹

Scholarship has advanced with publications on specific buildings, notably by James Macaulay on the Glasgow School of Art and The Hill House in the Phaidon series; William Buchanan and contributors on the building and history of the School of Art, and broader studies, specifically Robert McLeod's insightful narrative of 1968, David Walker's detailed analysis of the sources of Mackintosh's early buildings also in 1968, the 1990 edition of Mackintosh's architectural writings, and Alan Crawford's thoughtful biography of 1995. Visual stimulation and questioning have been provided to international audiences by Murray Grigor's films in 1968, 1972 and 1990.² Over the decades understanding has shifted from positioning Mackintosh as a pioneer of modernism to a richer, more layered view which accommodates tradition, symbolism, ornament, wit and complexity. At the same time, the decades have seen awareness of Mackintosh as architect overtaken by the wider public enjoyment

of the decorative and painterly – high-back chairs, rose motifs, flower paintings. After all, these are more readily accessible than technical drawings, stone and mortar.

The most substantial contributions to understanding of Mackintosh's architecture have come in the past few years, with the launch in 2014 by the University of Glasgow of the Mackintosh Architecture website (MARC) – www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk and the completion in 2017 of the subsequent Mackintosh Buildings Survey, led by the Society and featured respectively in the previous two editions of the Journal. Taken together these initiatives provide authoritative, comprehensive documentation of Mackintosh's architectural legacy, built and unbuilt.

Where do we go from here? It seems to me that there are two priorities in relation to Mackintosh's architecture: monitoring and research.

The Mackintosh built heritage is not secure, despite the small number of properties concerned and despite their high public profile – let us remember that in 1981 the readers of *Building Design* voted Mackintosh the best architect of the last 150 years and the School of Art the best building³ – Mackintosh's buildings require ongoing vigilance. Encroachments have been made – consider the multi-storey car park opposite Scotland Street Public School or the new glass builds to the north of the School of Art. Not until a Planning Appeal had been dismissed in December 2017, following referral to the Scottish Executive, was a wholly unacceptable proposal to build student housing high and hard against the School of Art finally quashed. That the scheme progressed this far is bewildering. Issues remain unanswered about future development at Craigie Hall and Queen Margaret College, and decisions are yet to be made about the long-term future of The Mackintosh House at the University. The Society's mechanisms are limited – and largely ad hoc and voluntary. Historic Environment Scotland appears to be increasingly passive. A monitoring group with a clear remit and commitment, and the appropriate expertise, resources and connections, needs to be set up. Perhaps the 'Buildings and Place Making' group recently set up by the newly-established CRM Senior Operations group will be a robust champion? Are there useful lessons to be learned from how the City of Barcelona manages and funds its Gaudi heritage?

View looking north from Scotland Street School Museum to the car park, by Keppie Design, 2006 © Pamela Robertson



There is much scope for new scholarship building on the findings of MARC and the Buildings Survey. Little work has been carried out to date on the contractors who contributed to the emergence of Glasgow as a great Victorian city – indeed it is fair to say that this aspect is generally under-researched within the wider period. The record books – the ‘job books’ – of Mackintosh’s architectural practice provide an extremely valuable microcosm of information on contractors and additional suppliers of goods and services. Over 520 contractors and an additional 130 suppliers involved in the practice’s output during the Mackintosh years are listed. These are all recorded on the MARC website together with biographies for over 350 contractors and suppliers, as well as clients. Also of value is the work that can be done on Mackintosh and his use of materials, a subject that hitherto has only been fleetingly addressed, but was the subject of a recent symposium at the Glasgow School of Art.⁴ Mackintosh operated at a pivotal transition moment between locally sourced and handcrafted materials, and the easy provision of materials produced mechanically and accessible via an increasingly widespread transport network. Traditional materials comprised stone, brick, plaster, iron, steel, glass, lead, paint, timber, asphalt, lime, terracotta, ceramic, cement and slate. New materials included ‘fireproof’ diatomite flooring and Portland cement. Newly accessible materials included the distinctive red sandstone quarried in the south west of Scotland. And new patented products used by Mackintosh included Anderson’s patent Vulcanite roofing and British Dolomert Lithic flooring.⁵



Jo Hormuth, Chicago Architectural Arts, studies the original stencilled panels (Coll. The Hunterian) from the Back Saloon of Mackintosh’s Willow Tea Rooms building as preparation for her replicas. © Pamela Robertson

The Back Saloon at the Willow Tearooms



The focus hitherto has tended to be ad hoc and confined to individual buildings, interiors, items of furniture. There is a unique opportunity now, given the nexus of substantial refurbishment projects currently underway, for a substantial, holistic project, ideally collaborative, which would harness the past and present valuable research work at the Glasgow School of Art, Miss Cranston’s Ingram Street and Willow Tea Rooms, and The Hill House; collate collection-based research carried out by other institutions such as the Art Institute of Chicago and the Royal Ontario Museum into artefacts in their care; and initiate new research on previously little investigated subjects such as Mackintosh’s architectural paint finishes and decorative metalwork. The outcomes of this research would surely have significant value for the presentation and conservation of Mackintosh’s designs, and that of his contemporaries, enhance understanding of production techniques at a critical moment in the development of one of Britain’s great Victorian cities, provide a pioneering, interdisciplinary study into production involving academics, technical scientists, and practitioners, and contribute to best practice in scientific analysis.

The concept of materiality – the affectiveness of materials – is more elusive, and subjective, and often inextricable from design.

George Adam & Son, Glasgow, made much of the decorative metalwork for the School of Art. This included the railings, finial, and entrance light of Phase One, for which they were paid just under £84.00. The business was founded by George Adam, a blacksmith, around 1874 and came to specialise in ‘art metal work’. It closed in 1909. © The Glasgow School of Art





Detail of wardrobe, The Hill House © Stuart Robertson

But it is clear that Mackintosh managed his materials with a heightened sense of their associative and aesthetic values, and with a range of intent. It could be historicising: harled elevations for The Hill House and the School of Art speak of Scottish castles and fortifications; metal cages in stairwells speak of medieval yetts; timber columns evoke trees of knowledge. Or subversive: tiling was a low status material generally confined to rear elevations and internal wells where its surfaces would reflect light. In contravention of this, Mackintosh faced both the front and rear elevations of the Daily Record building with white tiles. Or the combination of form and material in the brick-vaulted loggia at the School of Art – a basement cellar hoisted to the topmost level of the School. At the same time, it is accessible: Mackintosh's was a narrow and largely traditional range of materials, as we have seen, and one that was not intrinsically of high value. The palette was low-key – brown, black, toned white, green, green-blue, muted pink and purple, slate grey – that speaks of the Scottish landscape. In all of this there is a certain modesty, familiarity and respect for tradition. It can be eroticised: David Brett prompts us, with some justification, to see

Mackintosh's use of materials as part of a holistic, eroticised programme for each building: '... the more private the situation, the more likely a material is to be disguised; and the more public, the more likely it is to be displayed.'⁶ He cites, for example, the sleek, sensual forms of the white-painted bedroom furniture at The Hill House at the end of a journey which begins with its rough-cast exterior. And, finally, it could, of course, be aesthetic: in addition to the evocative, there is a sure understanding of the inherent beauty of materials. Not that of the Arts and Crafts movement, which derived from the thing well-made and an honest reveal of its qualities. The emphasis is rather on the lyricism of surface and outline illuminated and shadowed by the fall of light, enhanced by deft touches of colour – what could be seen as painterly values allied to an awareness of the potency of surface – polished metal, wood and cement, enamelled wood, dressed stone, reflective glass – or a controlled continuity of line, best seen in the School of Art library, where mind, eye and spirit are taken on a journey of exploration.

The threats that faced Mackintosh's buildings in the 1970s remain: lack of funding and lack of sensitive awareness about their needs. The legacy is small and precious: we have only some 30 buildings surviving with significant Mackintosh design input in all or in part. 2018, the 150th anniversary of Mackintosh's birth, provides a timely launch pad for research, and for an evolving city-led strategy for Mackintosh which must include a robust monitoring and management process for the built heritage.

1. The latter has now evolved as Glasgow Mackintosh, focussed on programming and marketing events organised by the members. This leaves a void in relation to the built heritage.
2. 1968, made as part of the centenary exhibition, funded independently by the Scottish Arts Council through Films of Scotland, with additional post productions costs assisted by BBC 2 London; 1972, made for BBC Scotland's arts series, SCOPE; 1990, 'The Fall and Rise of Mackintosh' STV.
3. *Building Design*, 30 March, 1984, p. 1.
4. *Mackintosh: Materials and Materiality*, Glasgow School of Art, 2017.
5. See Randal MacInnes's essay *Mackintosh and Materials* in MARC, http://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/essay/?eid=mack_and_materials.
6. David Brett, C. R. Mackintosh, *The Poetics of Workmanship*, London: Reaktion Books, 1992.

Appendix

The Mackintosh Buildings Survey (MBS) identified evidence of original finishes at the following properties and value in further investigation at a number of others, summarised here. MBS numbers are Mackintosh Building Survey numbers.

- MBS01 Belhaven Church, possible original stain
- MBS14 Achamore, Gigha – original harling
- MBS18 12 Clairmont Gardens – original paint finishes
- MBS21 Ruchill Free Church Halls – original harling and paint finishes
- MBS30 St Serf's, Dysart – original pigments
- MBS34 45 Carl-Ludwig Strasse, Vienna – original harling
- MBS36 1 Dunira Street, Comrie – original harling
- MBS38 Bridge of Allan Parish Church – original finishes
- MBS47 Auchenbothie Mains – original harling

The discovery in 2004–5 of the original stencilled mural decorations behind paint layers at St Serf's, Dysart, was a salutary lesson about the risk of accepting received wisdom on what does or does not survive of Mackintosh designs. It would be invaluable to undertake investigations to establish, beyond doubt, whether features survive at the following properties:

- MBS11 401 Sauchiehall Street – investigate behind shop fascia for surviving elements of the Mackintosh shop frontage
- MBS24 Windyhill – investigate whether any original stencilling survives beneath layers of overpaint
- MBS25 Dunglass Castle – investigate whether any Talwin Morris decoration survives beneath layers of overpaint,
- MBS41 Miss Cranston's, Argyle Street – confirm if any elements survive behind the lining of the west basement wall

In addition, investigations could also be undertaken at the following properties, which were outwith the scope of the Mackintosh Building Survey project, to establish definitively if anything survives of Mackintosh's decorative schemes or if there is data available e.g. size of fireplace openings:

Glasgow:

fireplace, 3 Lilybank Terrace (Billcliffe 1901.57.3); fireplace, 23 Huntly Gardens, Glasgow (Billcliffe 1905.29); fireplace, Warriston, Paisley (Billcliffe 1908.4)

Bassett-Lowke connections:

dining room for W. J. Bassett-Lowke, Candida Cottage, Roade (Billcliffe pp. 300–7); dining room for F. Jones, Bassett-Lowke's brother-in-law, The Drive, Northampton (Billcliffe D1919.1); bedrooms for Sidney Horstmann, Bath and W. Franklin (Billcliffe pp. 289–92)

Seeing the Light

With the fire receding into recent history, Liz Davidson, Senior Project Manager of the Mackintosh Restoration at The Glasgow School of Art, rehearses the story so far and testifies to the resilience and brilliance rising from the ashes.

The title is perhaps a little premature – the restoration of the Mackintosh Building is still over a year from completion – but for a number of reasons it is an entirely appropriate heading to give to this short article about the project.

The Facts: the fire which wreaked such ferocious injury on the beloved Mack in the late spring of 2014 started at just after midday on Friday May 23rd. It burned fiercely over that day and the fire fighters finally left the scene some 7 days later to a standing ovation from the crowds which lined Renfrew Street. The top floor of the west side of the building and the upper levels of the library tower were terribly damaged. But once – literally – the smoke had cleared and the dust settled, we found that the Mack had survived both in substantial fabric and, even more remarkably and importantly – in spirit. Mackintosh had built a strong building, in stone and brick he had enclosed and clothed a series of remarkable spaces, rooms and corridors which had clearly survived – ravaged in places, but too full of strength of character to be extinguished by either the fire or the gallons of water that had cascaded into the building in the immediate aftermath.

Much of the work to date has focussed on repairing the external shell of the building, on making it wind and watertight again – so stonework, roofs, glazing, lead and so on have been tackled. The Mack has almost a schizophrenic series of elevations, but there is a powerful kinship and logic to each of the facades, in particular, their relationship to natural light. This is most evident on the south elevation, often compared to one of the summer palaces of the south of France in the Pyrenees or a fortified hill town of that area which Mackintosh so expertly captured in his later paintings. The work to repair this Portland cement elevation will unify its appearance for the first time in decades resulting – we hope – in the

banishment of the patchy, checkerboard of recent times.

Mackintosh's use of Portland cement demonstrated vividly his love of new materials, techniques and processes. In the use of a three-coat Portland cement harl on the rear elevation, Mackintosh saw the means to clothe his 'ghostly grey castle perched atop its hilltop', to quote Professor Tony Jones, with a cloak that flowed around its broad shoulders. One of the issues in the restoration was the replacement and repair of this material. Traditional conservation would/should explore a breathable lime and sand harl – the material that Mackintosh was emulating in his homage to Scots Baronial structures such as Fyvie or Maybole Castles. This, however, was never used on the Mack so it would be an alien 'new' introduction. Furthermore, the benefits of lime require a fairly regular (quinquennial) maintenance regime of lime washing to ensure that the sacrificial coat does not degrade to deeper strata.

The second option was a modern, semi-breathable, more flexible coating system, that would have perhaps avoided the problems of the past of bossed panels

South elevation of the Mackintosh with new portland cement harl and lift of Studio 58 rooflights into position

and hairline cracking. But this would have almost certainly involved the introduction of movement joints – visible from the south and dispelling the impression of the single malleable sheet wrapping around his castle or hill town.

Despite the terrible scenes of the fire licking up the south façade on May 23rd, on closer examination much of the original harl was found to be still soundly bonded to the brick substrate. This was a welcome surprise both in terms of cost and programme. On the advice of the Scottish Lime Centre, a slightly modified cement harl was specified using the identical aggregates – sand from the Isle of Arran and so on. The whole, both new, repaired and original harl, will all be visually unified by a weak cement slurry coat so that, when the scaffold eventually drops from this façade, Mackintosh's ghostly castle will again haunt the ridge in a commanding manner.

East stairwell illustrating Glasgow marble finish to lower walls





Above: Studio 58 glazed rooflight being fixed in position

Right: Fullscale prototype of library bay in cabinet makers workshop studios

Below: Rebuilding of stonework to library window with temporary steel supports in place



One of the main achievements last year was the completion of Studio 58 – the soaring room at the top of the west Library tower with its Japanese style woodwork and light from all directions including top. The 10 metre high yellow pine columns that make up Studio 58 were shipped over from a demolished early 20th Century mill in Lowell, Massachusetts. We were keen to source a timber that had the same tight growth rings as the original. The timbers were lifted into position last June with masons checking in pockets to the stone, scaffolders running over and unzipping the temporary roof, crane operators wiring instructions to people far below and out of sight and joiners slotting in timber pegs to hold this massive twin portico structure together.

No essay on the Mack can pass without mention of the Library. This has been a scene of scaffold and dust for almost the whole of last year as the room, open to the ceiling of the former Furniture Store, was stripped back to its four walls – and

then the walls themselves stripped. At one point in the project the entire west gable was removed and the elevation appeared like a vast picture window onto the west end of Glasgow. The construction of the library itself in tulip wood (yellow poplar) is occurring off-site in the workshops of master carpenters Laurence McIntosh Ltd. They first built a prototype, a full scale floor to ceiling bay which convinced us that the decision to rebuild the Library, as near identical as the considerable research and explorations would permit, was both right and made possible through the continuity, not of the structure itself, but of the knowledge and talents of skilled crafts people.

The work of the stone masons on this project has been intricate and masterly. In rebuilding the piers of the great west facing windows the masons had to thread each block through the intricate framework of scaffolding, with the gable of studio 58 and many hundreds of tonnes of stone block sitting directly above them

– then bed the new stonework into place with a tolerance of barely 3mm.

Most of the new stonework has been brought in from Darney Quarry in Northumberland. Mercifully, the external skin of stone was not so fractured or fissured by the extreme heat as to require replacement and it was therefore possible to re-indent it back into its original location. Larger stones have also been re-cut and used for indents elsewhere. In a similar zeal for recycling – the roof joists of the east side have been re-used as floor joists in the former Professors studios. In these rooms the unusual double floor build-up creates more domestic proportions and affords the occupants a view out of the high windows.

In the full height studios of the ground floor and the magnificent first floor painting studios we have incorporated the original studio glass into new slim-line double glazing. This will allow the studios to perform substantially better in terms of energy efficiency. Similarly, the

substitution of the fluorescent lighting with LED fittings everywhere in the building will both significantly reduce energy usage, and create a beautifully shadowless white light coverage. It has the ability to respond to daylight levels and the varying demands of the occupants with up to four intensity settings.

Logistically, one of the main issues that the building will have to face when it re-opens in 2019, will be the modern day issues of security and access. In the Mack this is a dilemma as the insertion of a glass and steel pass gate and the paraphernalia, that accompanies such systems, would be a sizeable visual disruption in the understated sombre vaults of the entrance hall. It would also represent an obstacle, real or perceptual, to the free movement of the public to the Museum Gallery during exhibition times, which would be disastrous. At the same time we must also respond to the need to protect students' privacy and working environment in the studios. The final arrangement of how the entrance hall and public access will function is still evolving. However, we are confident that GSA will prioritise safe access, whilst the organised tours of the building will continue to provide scholarly and wider entry to rooms such as the Board Room and Library.

A number of items in the contract are not being delivered via the main contract. This is largely because these are such specialist areas of work that the School prefers to be in direct control of the brief and appointment. Amongst these main conservation crafts people are Rodney French of Lonsdale and Dutch, who are undertaking the miraculous restoration of the Library light; Graciela Ainsworth, who are painstakingly consolidating and protecting the plaster casts, and a host of others, some still to be formally appointed.

The lights in particular are undergoing an astonishing transformation: the darkened, charred, twisted scraps of metal, that emerged from the excavation of the debris in the Library, are being straightened, cleaned, re-soldered and re-glazed. The original antique brass finish has been restored and, most miraculously, will be capable of re-use.

Similarly, the so-called 'Glasgow marble', the polished cementitious render that the staircase walls are finished with, was feared irredeemably contaminated by the fire. A range of proprietary and specialist cleaning techniques were having little or no effect on removing the surface damage. We were faced with the option of hacking it off and re-applying it, if



Above: Collated light fragments ready for repair by Lonsdale & Dutch



Plaster casts

possible, to the same beautifully burnished finish. The 'marble' is, in fact, a product called Keene's Cement which is defined as:

'A hard finish gypsum plaster to which alum has been added and which was chiefly used as a gauging plaster for walls of hospitals, stores, railway stations – where an unusually tough and durable plaster was required'. (Wikipedia)

Fortunately, a specialist company in Bristol, 'Restorative Techniques Limited', was sent a chunk of the marble to test their potions on. Much to our astonishment and delight they developed a methodology to perfectly clean the surfaces, without too great a loss of the underlying age and patina of the render. This work will now commence in the spring.

There is little doubt, however, that when we open our doors to the world again in spring of 2019, there will be many who will see, feel, smell and hear the difference from the Mack we remember from before the fire. Woodwork will have lost its thick black paint layer and will instead reveal the materiality of the Douglas Fir, Yellow Pine and Tulipwood. Floors will be returned to their maple tight fitted planks from the thick grey floor paint that had been layered up like an, unappetisingly coloured, dauphinoise over the decades. The studio lights will burn a pure, shadowless LED. There will be beeswax applied to the dark golden timbers of the Library. The chairs will return as the original, slightly undersized comb back or 'Windsor' chairs that first inhabited the space, with their clasping wrap around seats and arm rest – so handy for supporting a book-reading pair of arms! The pendant Library lights will no longer be a dull matt black lacquer, but an antique brass, wired to provide, at the flick of a switch, 2019 expectations of lux levels as well as the much more subdued levels of 1909. Others, such as the plaster casts most affected by the fire, will also return, but many will be drastically altered – blackened in appearance, but strangely handsome and striking a somehow more stoical and heroic pose than pre-fire – but I may be just imagining that.

In June of last year, I attended a planning hearing to object to the development of a tall block of student accommodation at the rear of the Mack, which would have blocked daylight from teaching and exhibition spaces. We argued that passage of light into an art school is one of the fundamentals of how the building works and how students learn about shadow, colour, exposure, spectrum, texture, expression and materiality. Without light, natural light changed by the seasons, the weather and the time of day, NONE of these things are possible. We concluded by saying:

This is a BRILLIANT building, designed by a brilliant son of Glasgow, which continues to educate, inspire and enlighten people from all over the world; it shines a light on the City, and Scotland. But for brilliance you need light.

Fortunately, the development was refused. We look forward to both switching on the lights again in the Mack and to seeing it blazon out once more both physically and through the work of its students.

All photography by Alan MacAteer

The Big Box

A solution for conservation, access and enjoyment

This summer, the National Trust for Scotland plans to encase The Hill House in a huge structure to allow conservation work to begin. Richard Williams, General Manager for Glasgow & West, NTS, reveals the thinking behind this major initiative.

The National Trust for Scotland is not just a conservation organisation: in fact, three purposes are set out by statute. The first two relate directly to conservation: namely the preservation of buildings of architectural or artistic interest and the same for articles and objects of any description having artistic or antiquarian interest. However, the third creates an additional obligation and a further challenge: the access to and enjoyment of such buildings and places, articles and objects by the public.¹

This additional obligation requires us to think widely about how the public can physically and intellectually access our buildings and land and it is a good burden to have. However, it requires us to balance the viability of continued preservation with encouraging increasing footfall.

Enjoyment could be construed in the legal sense; however, it seems unwise for us to unduly limit our definition. Not least because our purpose is that such enjoyment is to be had by the widest possible public. Therefore, as a public-facing organisation it is right that we interpret enjoyment in the widest sense – that of “the act or condition of receiving pleasure from something”², acknowledging that tastes may vary.

When set against the purposes of the National Trust for Scotland, The Hill House asks questions in all three categories – how do we effectively preserve the building, which is clearly of architectural and artistic interest? In doing so, how do we look after the objects and decorative schemes within the building? Finally, how do we ensure access for the public, and that they enjoy what they have come to visit?

It is not the purpose of this short article to explain the problems of water ingress at The Hill House; suffice to say that the current situation is clear – the building is wet, the harling is allowing for water to

penetrate into the sandstone and brick substrate and that, as a result, there are considerable areas of rot throughout the building. Maintaining the status quo is therefore unsustainable, and in order to minimise the risk of repeating the pattern of smaller, often less successful interventions in the past, the National Trust for Scotland wishes to undertake a longer term programme, of which the shelter is just one part.

So where does the idea of the “Big Box” come in? In its simplest form, it is intended to contain the building, to shelter it from the majority of rainwater which falls on the building and to provide a shield within which research and active conservation can take place over the next few years. As the building dries, a more permanent solution to the challenge of water ingress can be found and a repair programme completed.

Of course, the principle of sheltering historic properties during a period of works is not new. Traditional methods of scaffolding and screening with a temporary roof have been commonplace for many years. Equally, it is not new to use this as an opportunity to engage the public with the conservation work, and with the building itself. The National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland have popularised some of these techniques, most notably during their extensive works at Castle Drogo, and more recently with their roof and stone works at The Vyne. The question of physical access therefore can be answered following a number of already established approaches.

The technical challenge at The Hill House, however, is somewhat different to that in the above examples. The building does not just need to be covered, it also needs to dry, preferably in the most natural conditions possible. The research and remediation work may take a number of years, during which the environmental controls inside the house need to be maintained as far as possible. Lastly, The Hill House is situated on a site with a number of technical constraints.

There is the geography – the house is on a relatively steep slope, towards the top of a hill overlooking the town of Helensburgh and the Clyde; it is confronted by rain and strong winds, usually from a south westerly direction; it is surrounded by a sensitive garden on all sides. The building is part of its environment – it was crafted with its situation and views in mind, which makes it indivisible from the town of Helensburgh and the Clyde. A semi-transparent solution to the issue of shelter naturally suggested itself: that the building can still be seen

when approaching from Helensburgh from the town, and that the view to the Clyde is still available from the house.

What kind of technical solution could be found to achieve this semi-transparent quality? Would this mean that the shelter also should be permeable and if so, how much rainfall can be allowed to penetrate and how can the impact of wind-driven rain against the structure be mitigated? If the solution was to permit no rainfall into the shelter, this would raise a different problem – it would require a completely sealed solution, and would create an artificial environment with even greater unknowns, and at a potentially huge cost to maintain stable and appropriate environmental conditions. If this is not achievable, and we accept that some rain may be able to penetrate the shelter, how do we design a shelter which is open to the elements but reduces the rainfall reaching the building? Our solution is the mesh box.

The proposed shelter will protect the building from just under 90% of the rainfall. Rain and wind modelling of the structure demonstrates that around 79% of the water is stopped by the roof. Of the 21% that remains, much will be stopped by the mesh or gangways, which will also significantly reduce the wind velocity. In order to ensure that there is an adequate area around the building to complete conservation and remediation work, the edge of the shelter, in almost all areas, is at least 2.5 metres from the edge of the building – therefore any wind-blown rain will need to penetrate to at least this distance.

The challenge of enjoyment remains. Annual visitor numbers at The Hill House have grown relatively slowly in the last few years, to around 28,000 visitors in 2017. The Hill House benefits from a higher than usual proportion of international visitors, reflecting the global appeal of Charles Rennie Mackintosh; it does, however, attract a smaller than average number of family visitors compared to other National Trust for Scotland properties. It also has a lower than average number of local and repeat visitors.

At best, we can tell from reviews left on the internet and internal surveys, those who visit enjoy themselves and appreciate the opportunity to spend time admiring the house and collection as well as appreciating its setting. But these are often the cognoscenti: visitors who know already of The Hill House and wish to make a once in a lifetime visit (often from overseas), or the experts – the students and practitioners of design and



architecture for whom a visit to The Hill House represents an educational pilgrimage. However, to what extent do we actually succeed in attracting the merely curious, or those looking simply for a great visit, and how do we meet their needs?

At its heart The Hill House is a domestic construction.³ It was not built for the needs of a modern visitor market. There is nearly no suitable space for a catering offer within the building – the current offer within the historic kitchen is very limited in scale. The retail space is equally fitted within a small area which was the former laundry. Disabled access is limited, and the admissions space in the entrance hall leads to queuing through the front door on many occasions.

But the prize is considerable. If we base our thinking on the much-quoted aphorism by the Senegalese poet and diplomat Baba Dioum – that “we only conserve what we love, we only love what we know, and we only know what we are

taught”⁴, the long-term future of The Hill House and, indeed, of heritage properties more widely, depends on ensuring that they are loved, now and also more widely into the future.

This thought then turns us back to the additional roles for the shelter of the property. If in constructing a conservation shield for the house, we are also able to reach new audiences, and inspire both existing and new audiences to have a new or deeper relationship with The Hill House, to understand the need for conservation, or simply to enjoy the space, the architecture and the location, then we may succeed in growing the underlying roots of preserving our heritage – love and understanding.

To this end, the shelter also includes some key elements that are not strictly required for conservation reasons, but are critical to the visitor experience. There will be a modest visitor centre, which will take away the need to retain the current offer within the building, and will allow us to

bring areas such as the kitchen back into their original state. More unusually, gangways around and over the building will allow visitors a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to view the property – and the conservation work which will be taking place within – from angles and locations that have never been previously accessible.⁵

The “Big Box” will afford us an opportunity to address the question of wider engagement and enjoyment whilst ensuring that it performs its principal function – that of protection. It is, however, only part of the overall future and conservation solution for The Hill House and is inextricably linked to the research, development and restoration of the water damaged parts of the property and the harling. The ultimate success of the shelter will be the success of all of these elements: new and more engaged audiences, a continuing increased level of interest in The Hill House and building preservation more generally. If the Big Box allows us to achieve all this, then it will have been the solution for conservation, access and enjoyment which the National Trust for Scotland intended.

1. National Trust for Scotland Order 1935 as amended in National Trust for Scotland Order Confirmation Act, 1938
2. Collins English Dictionary – Complete and Unabridged, 12th Edition 2014 © HarperCollins Publishers
3. “Here is the house. It is not an Italian Villa, an English Mansion House, a Swiss Chalet, or a Scotch Castle. It is a Dwelling House”, the reported words of CRM when the house was handed to Mr Walter Blackie on completion.
4. Baba Dioum, General Assembly of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, New Delhi 1968
5. It also will afford an unmissable view from the house to the town of Helensburgh, and onwards to the Clyde.

Mackintosh at the Willow

Show time for the original Mackintosh Tea Rooms

In the run-up to the much anticipated launch of 'Mackintosh at the Willow' in June this year, Celia Sinclair, Chairperson and founder of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, shares the latest updates on the restoration work and plans for the future. Once fully restored, the Mackintosh-designed tea rooms and new Visitor Centre will be a major attraction in the heart of Glasgow.

Miss Cranston's iconic Tea Rooms and Mackintosh's masterpiece at 217 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, are close to opening their doors to the public again. Once the place to be for socialites and business people, the restoration of this internationally significant building will provide a permanent world-class cultural and heritage attraction for Glasgow's residents and visitors. Mackintosh at the Willow celebrates the work and achievements of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald and Miss Kate Cranston, continuing their story in a modern day context.

The contractor's hoarding will come down this summer as this impressive £10 million restoration project nears completion. The Tea Rooms and the new, integrated Visitor Centre will launch under the shared brand 'Mackintosh at the Willow' with an initial opening on 7 June 2018. This will lead on to a more formal opening and launch in the autumn. *Mackintosh 150*, the Glasgow City-based, year-long programme of events and exhibitions celebrating the 150th anniversary of Mackintosh's birth, provides a highly appropriate setting for the re-emergence of the Tea Rooms.

In 2014, Celia Sinclair, founder of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, bought 217 and 215 Sauchiehall Street with the aim of restoring the Tea Rooms building to their former glory. The aim was to recreate



A look behind the hoarding. The frontage of 217 Sauchiehall Street, the original Mackintosh Willow Tea Rooms Building

Mackintosh's masterpiece as authentically as possible to its original 1903 design as well as creating a new, world class, integrated Visitor Centre in the adjacent building at No.215.

The Trust has received support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the restoration and, thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, the project has been able to progress. The strong list of supporters also includes The Monument Trust, Historic Environment Scotland, Glasgow City Heritage Trust, Glasgow City Council, Dunard Fund, Scottish Enterprise, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Hugh Fraser Foundation, Robert Barr's Charitable Trust, The Robertson Trust, Tunnock's and others. Fundraising efforts are continuing to support specific elements of the project, with sponsorship and other opportunities open to individuals and corporations.

In the last few months, the project team has expanded with a new Clerk of Works, a Learning & Activity Officer and PR & Marketing Manager joining the Trust

Operations Manager in late 2017. A CEO is currently being appointed. In January the team moved into their new permanent office at 211 Sauchiehall Street, one of many steps forward.

The first phase of the restoration completed the urgent works to the exterior of the building. Celia Sinclair, Chairperson of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, is excited that the second phase is focussing on the interior restoration and the creation of the Visitor Centre. "Phase 2 calls on the skills and expertise of a number of master artisans," said Celia, "and I am proud that the majority of our crafts expertise is based in Scotland. Over 420 pieces of furniture have been commissioned, in addition to glassware, a gesso panel, wrought iron work, textiles and carpets, with everyone involved working to the original Mackintosh designs."

Three furniture makers have been appointed. Angus Ross Furniture have been commissioned to make the ladder back chairs; Bruce Hamilton (Furniture Makers) Ltd, the tub chairs used in the Billiard Room; and Character Joinery are producing the silver chairs and tables for the Salon de Luxe.

Below: Section and close up detail of the original Salon de Luxe mirrored frieze, in the process of being restored by Linda Cannon. Images by Rachel Keenan Photography

Far right: The original chimney and the reproduction bow windows, reglazed by Bryan Hutchison Stained Glass Studios, to the south elevation on Sauchiehall Lane. Image by Rachel Keenan Photography



All the glasswork comprising the stained, leaded and decorative glass is being recreated by Linda Cannon and Rab MacInnes. This includes the two chandeliers for the Salon de Luxe, the glass embedded in the furniture, the glass droplets in the staircase, part of the grill between the front saloon and gallery and the baldachino. Bryan Hutchison Stained Glass Studio worked on the stained glass in the Billiard Room and the glazing to the main entrance screen in Phase 1. Now, in Phase 2 they are working with Character Joinery, making the glass inserts for the chairs.

The iron work and metal work are by master blacksmiths John Creed of Creed Metal Work and Alan Dawson of Alan Dawson Associates. They provide the metal work for the grill, stairs, outside signage including roundels and projecting signs and the light fittings. Vaughan Art Works are making the gesso panel for the Salon de Luxe and Chalk Works are restoring the plaster panels and mouldings.

Jo Hormuth, Chicago Architectural Arts, has been commissioned for the stencil wall panels, the stencilled curtains and hanging fabric panels for the back saloon and to advise on the design development and colours. The Grosvenor Wilton Company Limited are making the specialist carpeting and carpet runners for 217, the ground floor front and back saloon, stairs, Salon de Luxe and the Billiard Room.

Integrated with the carefully curated restoration of the famous Tea Rooms at No.217 will be the adjacent Visitor Centre at No.215. This includes a learning and

education suite facilitating interpretative learning, and retail, exhibition and conference facilities.

Studioarc Design Consultants Ltd are responsible for the design of the interior of the Visitor Centre including the exhibition space and retail area.

As a hub for tourism and information sharing, the Visitor Centre, designed with a high visibility street frontage, will offer Glasgow's first ever city centre based information and tour service completely dedicated to Mackintosh. This element will be run in partnership with the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society.

Celia Sinclair, Chairperson of The Willow Tea Rooms Trust, states that "a key part of the launch is a partnership with the CRM Society. From the outset of the project, the Trust has been working with the CRM Society, drawing upon its expertise and establishing shared values, passion and commitment. The Willow Tea Rooms Trust believes that the CRM Society's background, experience, depth of knowledge and contacts makes them the only partner possible with the specialist credentials to deliver the high quality service required".

Whilst the CRM Society's headquarters will remain at their home base, Mackintosh Queen's Cross Church, the front-line engagement with the public will move into the heart of the city. The Society will provide an all year round information and visitor service delivered largely by volunteers. This exciting new venture will directly support the wider tourism product of the city.

Alan Dawson, Master Blacksmith and Fellow of the Worshipful Company of Blacksmiths, one of the expert craftspeople involved in the restoration, working on the lighting ring for the Front Saloon. Image by Rachel Keenan Photography

Another important partnership has been forged with Dumfries House, Ayrshire, and The Prince's Trust. This will provide assistance and support for the recruitment and training of front-of-house catering and kitchen staff prior to opening, thereby creating opportunities for employment and skills development for young people.

The Willow Tea Room Trust's own Learning and Education suite at Mackintosh at the Willow, is developing schools, education, activity and outreach programmes, which will be run and delivered by a dedicated Learning & Activity team. There has already been successful engagement with schools and community groups through well received stencilling workshops.

The Willow Tea Rooms Trust and Mackintosh at the Willow are members of a core strategy group of Mackintosh heritage partners to co-ordinate *Mackintosh 150*. As one of Glasgow City's four key strategic tourism pillars, the celebration and promotion of Mackintosh plays a central part in a 10 year strategy, which supports the City Centre Strategy for the regeneration and development of a new cultural, historical and activity hub along Sauchiehall Street.

Mackintosh at the Willow will operate as a social enterprise that will deliver a range of exciting and sustainable activities and opportunities, both directly and in partnership, through the creation of a significant, world-class visitor attraction. The Trust is looking forward to opening the doors in June to an exciting 2018 and beyond.

For more details, news and updates on the project plans and Mackintosh at the Willow visit www.willowtearoomstrust.org

The original iconic Salon de Luxe doors will be on permanent display in the Visitor Centre with the replica doors used in the Salon de Luxe. Artist interpretation courtesy of Studioarc



Michael C Davis is an architectural writer, a former chair of the Architectural Heritage Society Scotland and a visiting lecturer at Strathclyde University.

Authentic?

With so many Mackintosh projects under restoration, the question of “authenticity” is never far away. Architectural writer, Michael C. Davis, takes a timely look at this topical aspect of building conservation, explaining why this term is often misunderstood or misused, and advocates a wider perspective.

The reinstatement of the Glasgow School of Art Library has had its share of debate. Potential removal of the harl from The Hill House has raised similar potential concerns around loss of original material.¹ These arguments may not always deploy the “a” word by name, but beliefs regarding authenticity lie behind them. When the work at these projects, at the Willow Tearoom and the Mackintosh House are completed in turn, we can expect to hear various takes on authenticity of detailing, of effect, and of process.

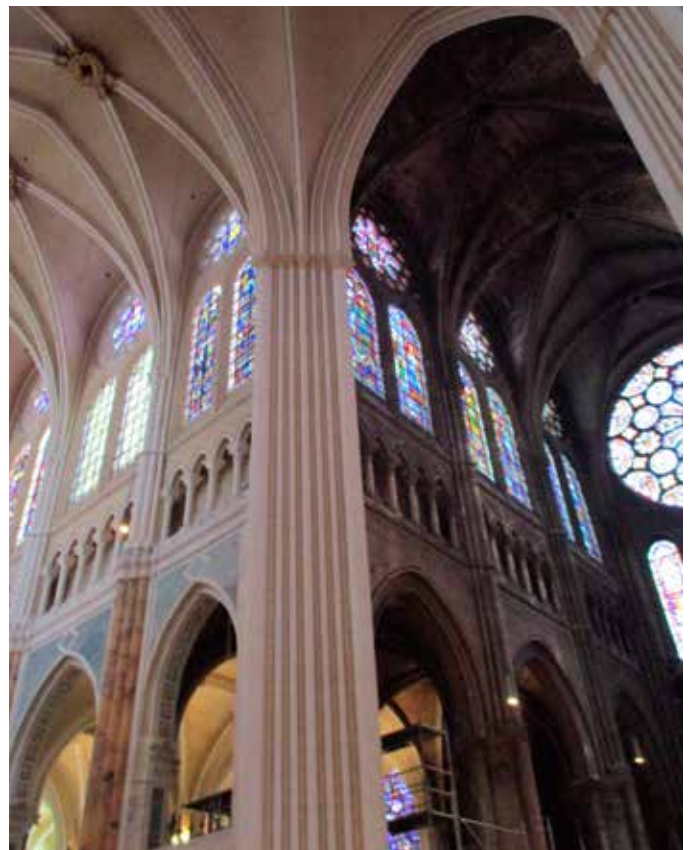
“Authenticity” is generally seen as fixed, absolute and authoritative. Unfortunately, though the term is often used persuasively to justify one approach or condemn another, it generally isn’t as fixed as might seem. It depends on context for meaning and on the perspective of the observer. Consider Ludwig II of Bavaria’s castles of Neuschwanstein and Herrenchiemsee. From one perspective, each is thoroughly inauthentic: a bogus “knight’s castle” and a near-replica of Versailles. If either were proposed to be built today, cynics and Modernists would make reference to *Disneyland*, talk of *pastiche* and argue for a “contemporary” design. Yet both buildings are quite clearly “authentic” in the context of 19th century romantic architecture, and thoroughly valued as such.

Chartres Cathedral, currently in process of being internally lime plastered to re-instate a former decorative regime, provides a further example. At first glance it may look as if the ancient, patinated stonework is being painted with very thick and smooth magnolia emulsion. A great deal can be said for authenticity and inauthenticity on either side of the ensuing debate, but the reaction of many on entering the cathedral is likely to be instantaneous: either one is shocked or delighted at this change. Rationalising one’s standpoint, one naturally reaches for “authenticity” and all its missiles. Yet is this really a simple knock-out fight in the cause of public engagement with the “true” spirit of the building? Or does each approach have a valid claim in its own context? On the one hand, change offers a return to authenticity/inauthenticity of one sort, while no change offers to preserve authenticity/inauthenticity of another sort. Far from being fixed, absolute and authoritative, “authenticity” is often illusory, diffuse and requires caution if employed as a yardstick for judgement. If authenticity can be understood in different ways, there are also different ways in which it can be assessed.

There is, of course, *material* authenticity, when greater or lesser value is associated with physical substance. For example, *Lion*

Chambers (1904–7) in Glasgow’s Hope Street, designed by James Salmon (Junior), is significant primarily because the building is a very early example of reinforced concrete construction. The revolutionary Hennebique construction gives the building its key importance. However, it is this system which has failed – visibly since 1991 – creating an unresolved dilemma of how to “fix” the outer walls without, in fact, replacing that which gives the building its key significance.

Made clean and smooth. Interior of Chartres Cathedral during recreation of a lost decorative scheme in 2016. Photo – M C Davis



Authenticity in terms of *design* may also have to be considered. We may restore an important design to give an authentic representation, even where material authenticity is largely lost. Original design values are a valid prism through which authenticity can be assessed, and this has been a clear and very relevant issue in restoring the burned-out GSA Library. The original design can be closely replicated and, since design is valued most in this instance, we can have back this element of the whole. In this context, the actual material, with which the room was constructed, was certainly part of its authenticity, but authenticity here does not only lie in its atomic composition; it is more significantly vested in design and in architectural effects. No one's gaze, after all, will penetrate beneath the immediate surface finish.

There is also the issue of authentic *experience*, as authenticity can also be understood in terms of the cultural engagement and educational understanding which we derive from viewing or visiting a building, and the way in which its "spirit" is faithfully presented or conveyed. The GSA Library, when completed, will not, on the whole, be materially authentic, although very great concern has been taken to incorporate as much as can possibly be re-used. It (hopefully) will be highly authentic in terms of re-instating the original design. But, ultimately, how the visitor interacts with, understands and gains from the experience is crucial to any encounter with its essence. A *virtual reality* reconstruction might satisfy a need to intellectually experience the interior purely as abstract architecture, but it cannot engage with us in the way in which a physical construction will do: as a space in an art school, where real encounters and interaction with others may take place, and where one may not merely purposely visit, but encounter, discover and embed the interior in real time and real lives.

Encouraging engagement – fleshing-out history – can extend to the employment of men in red tights at Stirling Castle and pigeon-plucking kitchen maids at Audley End. The Curatorial Director of English Heritage has recently talked of the way in which at Eltham Palace, authentic patina and recreation of a former appearance have each been pressed into service in different spaces in the cause of engaging more deeply with the public.² Her controlling rationale is vested in historical analysis and, where necessary, through intervening in the building itself, as at Audley End where "staff" in period costumes work within a recreated laundry and kitchens. Perhaps the most sophisticated representation is at Dumfries House in Ayrshire, where much altered interiors have been carefully assessed and treated, so that the visitor experience is true to the historical and architectural significance and effective as a meaningful experience.

However, conservation professionals do not always recognise that their own specific concerns may belong within a more inclusive spectrum of authenticity which encompasses not only materiality, but also issues of original design/former state and matters to do with engagement and understanding. Training or personal experience bring their own focus and, inevitably, an archaeologist, a mainstream planner, a conservation officer, a conservation campaigner, an academic theorist, a mainstream architect, a conservation architect, an architectural historian, a journalist or an enthusiast of whatever stamp or direction, may have radically different perspectives on conservation and restoration issues. A partisan analysis may evoke

only one form of authenticity as a seemingly authoritative club with which to belabour opponents.³

Recently, at their 2017 AGM, the National Trust for Scotland's CEO made reference to Gladstone's Land in Edinburgh, within the context of potential reuse of the present museum/visitor attraction as more lucrative holiday accommodation. "Much of it is not authentic", he pointed out. In absolute terms, the building is not (wholly) authentic, either in material terms or in terms of reconstruction to a former state. Yet, in terms of engagement with and understanding of a 17th/18th century merchant's residence, Gladstone's Land offers a surprisingly authentic experience, as remarked upon by Trip Advisor reviews testifying to the educational and experiential value. According to the Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions website, Gladstone's Land "is decorated and furnished with great authenticity to give visitors an impression of life in Edinburgh's Old Town some 300 years ago". And so it is. As an example of how authenticity can be defined in quite different ways with disparate conviction, Gladstone's Land could scarcely be bettered.

There is a further point to consider. As time moves on, so do buildings and their conservation. Conservationists and theoreticians

since the 19th century have emphasised the importance of successive layers of historical alteration. The modern conservationist, Jutta Jokilehto, has defined the authentic elements of a structure as "...*genuine material documenting the different historical phases of a particular structure or place*..."⁴ Less attention has been given, however, to the fact that structures and their conservation are not static but dynamic. Put simply, the past is not over. If everything added is somehow authentic, then everything that will be done in future will also by definition become an authentic layer of development. It is all very well to talk of "historic" layers, but when can history be considered to stop? From an inclusive, panoramic viewpoint, authenticity can scarcely be held to have value *in itself* as a yardstick with which to make any form of meaningful assessment during conservation or restoration as to the relative significance of past work. If everything is authentic, what value can be placed on authenticity? Yet, if

the interest range is narrowed to perhaps one historical development, "authenticity" is not in itself the arbiter. This is not to argue that decisions, and often difficult decisions, should not be made; simply that reliance on exclusive or inclusive conceptions of authenticity is only part of the evaluation process.

To illustrate, the 1989 burning of Uppark, a National Trust property, led to a faithful and convincing restoration of the interiors, thanks to generous insurance cover and the rescue of most of the contents. Like the work underway at the GSA Library, Uppark exemplifies the apparent paradox inherent in reconstruction: in one sense, essentially inauthentic, while, in another sense, capable of achieving authentic recreation. Uppark had its initial opponents: "it won't actually *be* Uppark, no matter how skilful the work of the 20th century craftsmen who seek to recreate it. What tourists will come to see will, in fact, be a replica, which could be said to diminish those fragments which actually are authentic..."⁵ Another writer fretted over wallpaper which was made to look old and faded.⁶ Yet, a quarter century later, Uppark is not a subject of controversy. Visitors are impressed by the way the reinstatement has replicated the atmospheric shabbiness of worn textiles and finishes. Moreover, the very story of the fire and



Authentic experience. A pigeon-plucking kitchen maid at Audley End in Essex brings visitors in touch with the realities of past work. Note the splash of blood on the paving. Photo – M Davis

of the reconstruction has become a leading interest of the place, figuring largely in the guidebook and other literature, and in visitors' experience. Visitors can even buy a postcard showing the row of tarnished, antique fire-buckets which survived the fire.

The point is that the *old* Uppark interiors *did* (partly) perish. Much is replica. What critics failed to appreciate, even beyond the value of authentic design and experience, is the *dynamic nature* of heritage and conservation: it is the feat of restoration and of recreation which visitors now come to see and this forms another layer in the history of the place, just as would be so, were they viewing a reinstatement from the 1890s. The recreation has now become part of the authentic heritage of a partly *new* Uppark, and the same will doubtless soon be the case in differing degrees at Glasgow School of Art, The Willow Tearoom, the re-located "Mackintosh House" interiors presently at Glasgow University, and at The Hill House and its proposed £4.5 million covering. That something is authentic and dynamic does not necessarily reflect on its architectural or conservation value.

We can see that there are difficulties in valuing authenticity for its own sake, or in wishing to retain work simply because it is "authentic". We have already seen that what commentators may consider authentic is much influenced by context and by perspective. We now understand that in any wide perspective, everything – good, bad or indifferent – can be authentic. And we also appreciate that modern, contemporary treatment of a building is not detached from its history, but shortly becomes, for better or worse, an element – perhaps an important element, perhaps not – of its heritage. Far from clarifying evaluation, claims of "authenticity" or "inauthenticity" can be seen at worst as partisan and at best as pointless, however convincing they may seem at first glance. We may need the word, or words like it such as "genuine" or "original", to distinguish work under consideration from later additions, but we have to be very careful indeed to avoid using the term as in itself providing an authoritative evaluation of quality or of worth.

To find a logic for authenticity, we ultimately have to place it within the rationale for heritage conservation. Why do we conserve? Why do we think it desirable that our children's children should have the opportunity to visit GSA and The Hill House, or to take tea in Miss Cranston's Willow Tearoom? For many heritage professionals, conservation is carried out by skilled professionals according to a code of ethics in order to repair buildings. For many others involved with governance and planning, conservation may seem circumscribed by regulations and guidelines. Perhaps a more encompassing answer is that conservation is about us. It is a social matter. It is a desire and, at times even a movement, on the part of a wide section of society, and, more strongly, the desire of a determined smaller number, to carry with us, from the wreck of the past, as much cultural baggage as we can save, for as long as we can save it and value it.

Far from a clinical exercise exclusively carried out according to best practice on huge budgets, conservation is most often a matter of compromise, of agitation and lobbying and, all too often, of loss. There can be no ultimate victory, only a continuous rear-guard action on a long retreat punctuated by fire, water ingress, indifference, philistinism and destruction. The Hill House or the The Willow Tearoom or Queen's Cross Church may be saved in the past, the present or near future, but our children or grandchildren will probably need to save them again. The future of the former Queen Margaret College and of Craigie Hall remains unsecured.

The ancient author Plutarch once recounted the tale of Theseus ship, a cultural icon preserved in ancient Athens.⁷ Under a regime of care over centuries, as elements rotted they were replaced until it became a topic for philosophers to debate: is this still Theseus' ship, when so much has been replaced and replicated? We can imagine that some put the case that it was not, since most of the original

material had gone, while others claimed that it was, very likely arguing for the surviving relic as conceptual, as dynamic by nature and as existing primarily in terms of the experience of engagement. Substitute for Theseus boat, the conservation project of your choice – the GSA restitution, perhaps – where the importance of material authenticity as opposed to other forms of authenticity has been debated – and you are dealing with the same issue argued-over, long centuries ago, in the philosophical schools of Athens.

The *Theseus' Ship Paradox* is seen as a threatening dilemma and "worst case" scenario. To explode the paradox, we must realise that architectural conservation, beyond a few structures connected to the life-support system of ongoing state funding, is not in reality a purist programme of limited intervention in pursuit of ideal options. It is most often – and most successfully – the tenacious, bold and gritty working-out and assembly of a solution which cuts through political, funding, cultural, practical, ideological and aesthetic challenges in order to save a building. In such cases, success may owe far more to vision, creativity and determination than to SPAB principles or abstract theorising. Conservation is not "about" conservation. It is about us. I believe that the true conservators in the case of Theseus' ship were not the philosophers who debated abstract notions surrounding the issue of authenticity. The true conservators were those craftsmen who made the decisions – often difficult decisions – about what to replace and how to replace it, well aware that they were faced with imperfect choices between loss and replication, in order to take with them something from the relentless march of time. "Something" which, whatever it might lack in material authenticity, might still retain the authenticity of the original design and offer authenticity through the experience of engagement. Conservation is about making choices. Careful conservation is about careful choices, rather than about making no decision at all.

This paper underlines the difficulties for those who advance a narrow conception of authenticity without seeing the whole picture. Yet, if we cannot look only to simplistic assertions about authenticity to resolve our conservation dilemmas, how do we make the decisions which have to be made? How do we decide what route is best in any project or in each issue within a project? I can offer only an imperfect route: experience, love, understanding and judgement. Undeniably subjective, pragmatic in the search for a sustainable future and willing, when necessary, to undertake a degree of compromise, this approach is, as Churchill said of democracy, the worst system except for all the others. I believe that the banner under which conservationists should group is not authenticity, but more careful, considered judgement along with a clear understanding of why we wish to conserve. It is far from perfect, but it is the best we have. As Charles McKean once put it, "True conservation is not about words on paper: it is about making judgements that will support a building's future."⁸

1. See: 'Mackintosh library plan should be ditched, says expert', *Herald*, 3.09.14; and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/4tR37dg3bZtcWltqPRD8cfZ/mackintosh-library-to-be-restored-a-lost-opportunity>. One on-line comment (*Herald* on-line, 6.12.17) regarding The Hill House, likened replacement of harl to stripping the paint off the Mona Lisa.
2. Anna Eavis, quoted by Deborah Mulhearn in 'Upstairs, downstairs', an article in *Museums Journal*, March 2017, p.24
3. For example, ruins are often seen as authentic, while another equally valid interpretation sees ruination as the least authentic state a building can reach. See Michael C. Davis, *The Scottish Castle Restoration Debate 1990-2012*, Spindrift Publishing, 2013, p.19
4. J. Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999, p.303
5. Deyan Sudjic, quoted in *The Sunday Correspondent*, 17.09.1989
6. Aylin Orbasli on the reconstruction of Uppark. *Architectural Conservation Principles and Practice*, Blackwell, 2008
7. Plutarch, *The Rise and Fall of Athens: Nine Greek lives*, trans. Ian Scott-Kilvert, London, 1960, p.29
8. Charles McKean, *Castle Tioram Public Inquiry Precognition*, p.20 (kindly made available by the author prior to his death)

Dr Trevor Turpin is the Chair of the Board of the Museum of Bath at Work and author of the Museum's catalogue of the 2017 exhibition 'A Bedroom at Bath'.

A Bedroom at Bath

In the last issue of the Journal Dr Trevor Turpin, Chair of the Board of the Museum of Bath at Work, gave a tantalising review of the exhibition at the Museum of a bedroom designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Now, in greater detail, he explores the story of this near-forgotten Mackintosh work.



The completed display of Mackintosh's bedroom design at the Museum of Bath at Work, 2017

Charles Rennie Mackintosh designed a bedroom for the Bath inventor and engineer, Sidney Horstmann, in 1917. The room was furnished with furniture designed by Mackintosh and made at the instigation of Wenman Bassett-Lowke, the model engineer of Northampton, who was an acquaintance of Horstmann. The room design, original photographs and the furniture itself have all survived and, in 2017, to mark the room's centenary, it was reconstructed at the Museum of Bath at Work.

In the summer of 1917, a parcel was delivered to Onega Lodge, a mid-Victorian villa on the Upper Bristol Road on the approaches to the City of Bath. It was addressed to Sidney Horstmann, a young Bath engineer and inventor, who was busy producing screw-thread gauges for the War Office in his factory (the old Bath roller skating rink) along the road in James St. West. The parcel contained designs for decorating the main bedroom of the house Sidney shared with his wife Frances and daughter Katherine. Together with the designs, there were also precise instructions, fabric and stencils. They were the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, then living in London and the design carried his address: *2 Hans Studios, 43A Glebe Place, Chelsea SW3*.

This is based on the memory of the Horstmann's youngest daughter, Alison who was born in 1920 and was told the story by her parents. We do not know if the parcel was sent by Mackintosh or by Wenman Bassett-Lowke, the Horstmann and Mackintosh go-between. Based on Alison's memory of the room having curved windows at the top, we know that the room was upstairs in the front of the Lodge.

The room was decorated by local craftsmen, who followed Mackintosh's design as far as they were able. We shall see that they were not entirely successful in this respect. The bedroom was completed by a bedroom suite, also designed by Mackintosh, that Sidney bought from Bassett-Lowke for £100. The room also had a gas mantle and a gas stove. Alison was born in one of the twin beds and it became the room she shared with her elder sister, Katherine. The design was in the 'modern' style which was what Sidney wanted, but not perhaps as homely as Frances would have wished – a reaction to Mackintosh's designs she shared with Bassett-Lowke's wife, Florence. Alison remembered the decoration of the room quite clearly, with the wooden floorboards painted black with rush mats stencilled with the same frieze design that ran round the walls.¹ She also remembered the fabric for the curtains for the bay window and for the panel behind the beds as being blues, purples and greens, 'like the eyes in a peacock's tail'.

The furniture was made at Knockaloe camp on the Isle of Man by mainly German internees. Crafts workshops had been set up by James Baily, a Quaker and crafts teacher in 1915 and the cabinet makers were supervised by a Polish immigrant, Otto Matt, who had been the foreman of a furniture factory in London before the war. Wenman Bassett-Lowke initially had Mackintosh design a bedroom suite for his bedroom at his parents' house in Northampton; the designs were then sent to Knockaloe – four sets were made.

There was a camp censor, the artist and designer Archibald Knox, and it has been suggested that he may have had a role in interpreting the designs for the makers; he would certainly have seen the drawings as they passed through his hands.



Onega Lodge, Bath in Time

The furniture was mostly mahogany, variously inlaid with mother-of-pearl and aluminium. Billcliffe has described the furniture in detail² and the Horstmann suite is fully illustrated in *A Bedroom at Bath*.³ The suite comprises: twin beds, wardrobe, dressing table and chair, washstand, ladder-back armchair, two chairs, wall mirror, bedside cupboard, towel rail and luggage bench. The washstand splashback was glazed with a Foxton cretonne design by Mackintosh which was in production in 1917.⁴ (This was repeated for the curtains and the panel behind the beds). The bedroom design and furniture were displayed at the Museum of Bath at Work in 2017. It is very well made, surprisingly light and shows little signs of wear despite being used as family furniture for almost 50 years. Alison's son, Tim Dunmore, recalled bouncing on the bed and playing with his toys on the washstand.

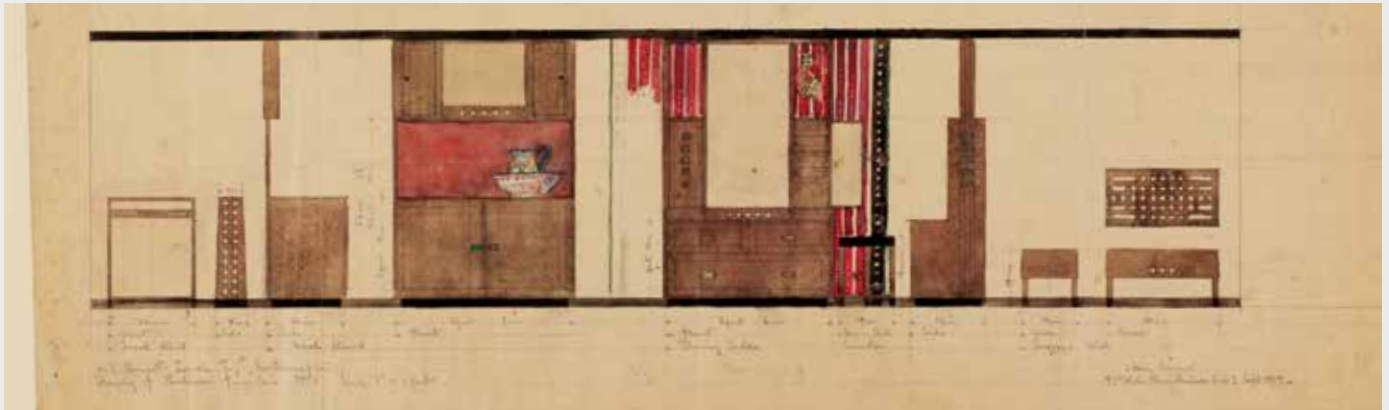
Although Bassett-Lowke and Horstmann have been described as friends and colleagues, and Alison recalled her father staying in Northampton in the guest bedroom at 78 Derngate, we have no knowledge of how they met. There is also no evidence that Horstmann ever met Mackintosh or that Mackintosh visited Bath: everything seems to have been arranged by Bassett-Lowke. The bedroom wall design is titled: *W.J. Bassett-Lowke Esq.*

In 1935, the Horstmanns left Onega Lodge and moved to Fairlawn, a large Victorian villa in extensive grounds in Lower Weston in Bath across Royal Victoria Park from Onega Lodge. They took the furniture with them but it is not known what happened to the decoration or fabrics – even or if they still remained. At some stage, and it is likely that it was at the time of the move, the printed fabric behind the glazed splashback to the washstand (which originally matched the curtains and panel behind the beds), was replaced by a contemporary design by the textile designer, Minnie McLeish (1876–1957) who had provided designs for William Foxton. The original fabric – made at the time when Mackintosh and Margaret were also producing designs for manufacturers such as Foxton – can be seen on a contemporary photograph of the bedroom. It is regrettable that it was lost since it was one of the rare occasions when Mackintosh incorporated fabric of their design into his furniture.

Although Alison Dunmore recalled that her father could not remember the name of the designer for some years (she reminded him when she saw a photo of Mackintosh furniture in a magazine), he was adamant that it should move with the family to Fairlawn saying 'One day this furniture will be in a museum'.⁵

Onega Lodge eventually became Onega Garage with petrol pumps and workshop. In 1977, an application was made to Bath City Council to demolish the building and replace it with a second-hand van sales centre. Despite objections and four refusals by the Council to revised schemes, in 1979 the Secretary of State allowed an Appeal

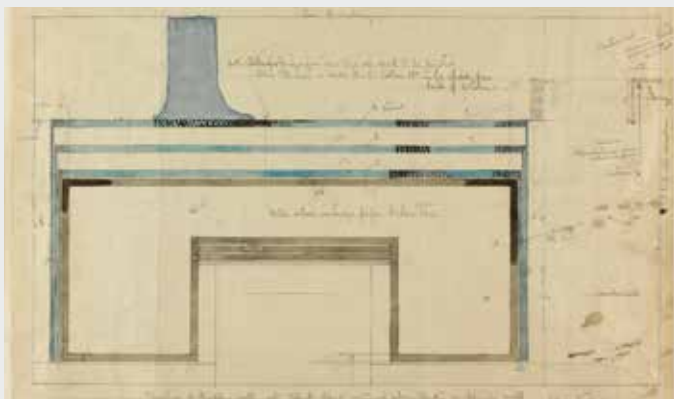
Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Design for furniture, guest bedroom 78 Derngate
© The Hunterian, University of Glasgow 2018



Isle of Man, Knockaloe cabinet making workshop.
© 78 Derngate Northampton Trust and the Manx Museum.



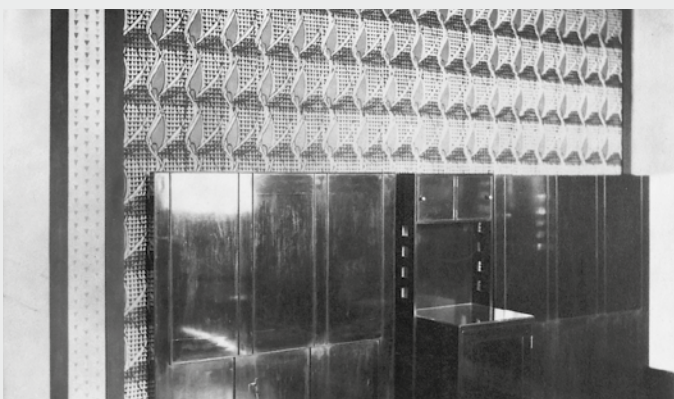
Horstmann's furniture ready for dispatch from Knockaloe.
© 78 Derngate Northampton Trust and the Manx Museum.



Mackintosh's design for the wall decoration for 'A Bedroom at Bath'.
© The Hunterian, University of Glasgow 2018



Onega Lodge bedroom, the same wall as completed in 1917,
Photo: Victoria & Albert Museum, London



Twin Beds with fabric, Roger Billcliffe, collection of the V&A



Halfords (previously Lucas) service centre,
Upper Bristol Road, Bath.

for permission to demolish the Lodge. His Inspector was of the opinion that "Onega Lodge...does not make a positive contribution to the appearance and character of the ...Conservation Area". A Lucas Service Centre was subsequently erected on the land. It is not known if any of the original Mackintosh designs remained beneath paint or wallpaper at that time. (Fairlawn itself was demolished in 1972).

Sidney died in 1962 and the furniture stayed at Fairlawn until 1966 when Frances sold it to the V&A for £200. Some of the furniture (dressing table and chair, washstand, towel rail, bedside cupboard, armchair and wardrobe) was then briefly displayed at Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood in 1966 as part of the exhibition, *A Half Century of Modern Design*, 11 November 1966 – 4 February 1967; the wardrobe and the ladder-back chair were then shown at the Edinburgh Centenary Exhibition of *Charles Rennie Mackintosh 1868–1928*, in 1968. At this exhibition, the chair was described as Mackintosh's last variation of the ladder-back.⁶

In 2015, the Museum of Bath at Work determined to bring back some of the furniture to Bath for its centenary in 2017. Given that contemporary contemporaneous photographs of the completed room still exist, together with Mackintosh's wall design, it was planned to recreate the bedroom setting for the furniture.

The Victoria & Albert Museum approved the loan in 2016, and plans were made to recreate a representation of how the room itself would have appeared in 1917. Based on previous experience at the Museum of Bath at Work, a 'set' was constructed by Rich White⁷, three metres square and three metres high. This was probably around two-thirds the size of the original room.

The decoration⁸ had to be adapted to the difference in room dimensions and to the loan of only some of the furniture, but nevertheless aimed to create a representation of the room based on the contemporary photographs, Mackintosh's design and Alison Dunmore's recollections. It was decided to use stencils as Mackintosh had instructed and to follow the colours indicated on his scale drawing.

It was immediately apparent that the design as shown in Mackintosh's drawing had not been faithfully carried out by the decorators in 1917. In particular, and as an example, the spaces between the black bars above the fireplace are much wider in the

completed room than in Mackintosh's sketch. Mackintosh had also stipulated that the central line of blue and black inverted triangles in the frieze should be two rows of larger triangles: the decorators appear to have continued with three rows of the same dimensions as the other outer lines.

The result was a bright room as viewed through the north-facing bay window. This would have been a surprising experience at the time – certainly unexpected in a mid-Victorian Villa.

While the method of decoration drew upon the stencilling skills of the Arts and Crafts movement, it could be said that the designs (undertaken for 78 Derngate at around the same time) were looking forward to the geometric idioms of the Art Deco era – which of course was not to be known as such until some eight years in the future at the Exposition des Artes Decoratifs. As has been noted above, the fabric used in the room was exhibited at Paris, which contributes to the perennial assertion that Mackintosh was ahead of his time.

For the purposes of the display at the Museum, the material behind the bed was chosen to sit within the palette of McLeish yet introduce elements common in Mackintosh's work: tulips and fritillarias with square motifs. This was a Liberty print supplied by Truro Fabrics.

What is perhaps remarkable about this episode is that it took place over the space of less than a year during the First World War, when the USA had yet to land troops in any number in Europe, Russia had turned on itself and the outcome of the war could by no means been predicted i.e. it was a perilous time for Britain and the Allies. And yet, here were two men in their thirties, engaged on important engineering work for the war effort, seemingly distracted by the decoration of a bedroom. More than that, they were able – notably through the efforts of Bassett-Lowke to exploit the skills of men interned on the Isle of Man – to source materials and transport to produce furniture of high quality both in terms of design and construction. The reality is that they were still pursuing (certainly in Bassett-Lowke's case) their principles of good design. The result was the transformation of what was undoubtedly a dreary Victorian bedroom into a space bathed in northern light. All down of course to the genius of one man who was simply doing what he was good at and trying to earn a crust in the only way he knew during difficult times.



The Museum's catalogue of the 2017 exhibition "A Bedroom at Bath" is obtainable from the Museum www.bath-at-work.org.uk

The author would like to thank the Victoria & Albert Museum for the loan of the Mackintosh furniture, Paul Minott, lecturer in Design at Bath Spa University, Stuart Robertson, Director of the CRM Society, David Walsh and Rob Kendall at 78 Derngate, Tim Dunmore, The Hunterian, the Manx Museum, Bath in Time, Roger Billcliffe and Mike and Angela Collins.

1. Interview by Angela Collins, CRM Society, Bath, 2006.
2. Billcliffe, Roger. *Charles Rennie Mackintosh: the complete furniture, furniture drawings & interior designs*. (Abrams, 2009).
3. Turpin, Trevor. *A Bedroom at Bath*. (Museum of Bath at Work, 2017).
4. Emerson, Richard. *Designing for industry – Mackintosh and textiles*. (CRM Society Journal 100 p.23). This article provides a full account of the design by William Foxton in Drawing and Design, August 1919. The design was later exhibited at the Exposition des Artes Decoratifs in Paris in 1925. Note that the article repeats the earlier mis-attribution to the furniture being from Fairlawn, which Horstmann did not move to until 1935, although that was indeed where the furniture was purchased from by the V&A.
5. Supple, Ruth. *Part of the Furniture*. (Northampton Image Magazine, 1999).
6. Young, Andrew McLaren. *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868-1928)*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Festival Society, 1968).
7. Rich White, Counterwork. www.counterwork.com
8. Undertaken by Paul Minott and Trevor Turpin.

Paul Minott, Bath Spa University, applying stencilled frieze.

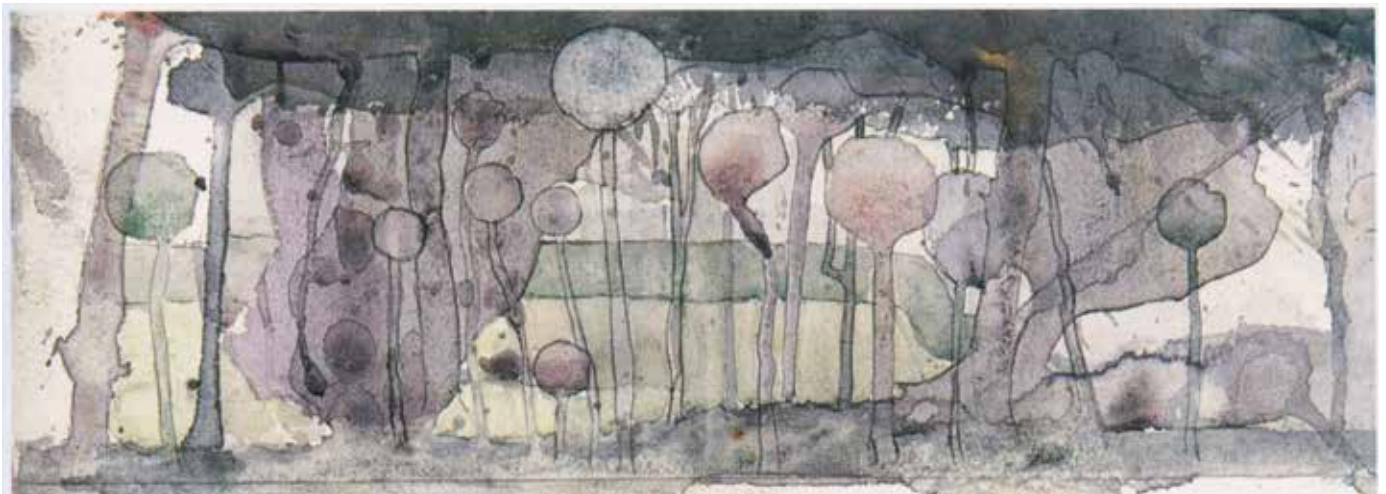
Stuart Robertson, Director of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society, presents Part 1 of his fascinating interview with Roger Billcliffe.

An Interview with Roger Billcliffe

Last October Roger Billcliffe launched his new book *Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Art of The Four*, the most comprehensive account yet of the shared artistic endeavours of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Margaret Macdonald, James Herbert MacNair and Frances Macdonald. 'The Four' were at the forefront of a new poetic movement, entirely true to themselves and occupy a special place in history. The book is beautifully illustrated and covers all the art forms and media they embraced, from architecture, graphic design, furniture to fabrics and includes some rarely seen works. Since reading the book Stuart wanted to discover more about Roger's research into the work of The Four and, in late January, spent three enjoyable and fascinating hours talking to Roger about his career, Mackintosh and The Four.

Given the extensive nature of their conversation and in order to do it full justice, the interview will be presented in extracts over the next three issues.

Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *Cabbages in an Orchard*, 1894, pencil and watercolour, 8.6 x 23.6 cm, Glasgow School of Art



SDR – I believe you mentioned that the idea of the book started in the early 70s – is that right?

With Harry Barnes, at the School of Art, and McLaren Young who was my boss and Professor of Fine Art at Glasgow University, I was contacted in 1973 by a publisher, Andreas Papadakis, to write one of three books on Mackintosh that he was planning. Papadakis owned Tiranti, which was an architectural bookshop in London that had a small publishing arm mainly producing technical books. But he wanted to extend it into more general books. I was the only one foolish enough to sign the contract because I needed the money, well there wasn't any substantial money really, but it was an interesting addition to a junior lecturer's salary at the university in 1972 or 3 or whenever it was. But the most interesting bit of the commission, actually, was that Papadakis chose as the book's designer a man called Ruari McLean who was the doyen of typographers and book designers and was then living in Dollar. He designed the classic boy's comic the *Eagle* and lots of more serious stuff as well; not that there's anything more serious than the *Eagle*. But he produced the most boring layout that I have ever seen; I didn't say anything because I thought, what do I know? Papadakis rejected it and basically did it himself and that became the *Mackintosh Architectural Studies and Flower Drawings*. It took forever to appear (1977) and then Papadakis said 'we will do a book on the Glasgow Style', but I had had enough of Academy Editions by that time and didn't really want to do any more with him.

Before the book was published, probably late 1974, Ian Cameron, who was a book packager in London contacted me and said that he would like to do a book on the *Glasgow Style*. Ian was a much more approachable and easy-going guy; he edited and produced an influential film magazine called *Movie*, apart from being a packager for major publishers. We talked about the *Glasgow Style* and what it would be and the more I thought about it the more I felt it was too broad a subject. In those days, and even now, what was needed was a book that was going to encompass Walton and Taylor, John Ednie, Logan and Jessie King and all of those artists and designers and I didn't particularly want to get involved with something as wide-ranging as that. I was very busy with the construction of the new Hunterian Art Gallery and the book project sort of slid. Ian wasn't going to push it

because he wanted me to do it rather than find another author, and we left it at that. At about the same time, Gerald and Celia Lerner started work on their book on the Glasgow Style and eventually Ian's commission for the Glasgow Style changed into him publishing the university's Hunterian Gallery catalogues. The University didn't exactly renege on that deal – it was discussed rather than finally agreed – and so the emphasis changed towards a catalogue of all of Mackintosh's furniture. Things had happened with the new gallery, or rather, very little was happening because work was slowing down as we were running out of money. The public displays of the art collection in the old Hunterian had to be closed because we had agreed to give the art gallery space to the geology and archaeology departments sometime in 1976, when we expected to move into the new gallery in Hillhead Street. The gallery wasn't ready so everything went into store, hastened by a fire bomb, a Molotov cocktail, which had been thrown through the windows of the building next door to our offices in Bute Gardens where all the Mackintosh collection and the university's watercolours and print collections were stored.

SDR – In your book you mentioned that the E.A. Hornel painting, The Brook, 1890 was one of his earliest symbolist paintings and was purchased by Herbert MacNair. You highlight that the painting anticipates many of the motifs The Four were to use in their work in 1893.

MacNair didn't buy it with his own money. Although he could probably have afforded it; it cost around £70 and he won it as a prize in the Art Union in 1891. Mackintosh's watercolours already had that palette; the drawing of Glasgow Cathedral from the Necropolis has those same moody blues, greens and reds that you get in Hornel's paintings at that time. I would guess that Mackintosh would be looking at them, I'm sure he would be going to the Institute regularly, certainly in 1891 as one of his architectural designs was in the show that year and I'm sure that Hornel must have appealed to him. He had more opportunity for looking at Hornel once MacNair got the picture and the kimonos that the girls are wearing must have had an effect on him – look at all of the women in Mackintosh's mid-90s works, in the posters and the stencils at Buchanan Street, and the fairies in the fairy pictures 1896, 97 and 98. They might occasionally have arms but they very rarely have legs and feet, they are enclosed in these big long shapeless dresses,

basically kimonos. Japanese dresses and fabrics and furniture were readily available to see or buy in Glasgow; one of the Glasgow Boys had a side line as an antique dealer, dealing primarily in Japonaiserie. Mackintosh would have been aware of Hornel before Herbert got the picture, just as I'm sure that rather more intimate and prolonged contact with it – I don't know how long MacNair kept it – would have been very useful.

SDR – The Harvest Moon of 1892 was a major landmark for Mackintosh as his first major symbolist painting.

It was certainly important for Mackintosh; but we don't know how many other pictures like that he might have made. That one survives – possibly survives because he gave it to John Keppie and it stayed in the Keppie family until the Keppies gave it to the Art School. Now, did Mackintosh do others? We don't know. None was exhibited, but I don't think *The Harvest Moon* was publicly exhibited either, come to that (other than possibly in the School of Art Club), but it was important because all of a sudden Mackintosh was no longer being an architectural watercolourist, he was being an artist, he was painting a picture that could stand in an exhibition such as the Institute or The Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour (RSW), or a dealer's gallery in Glasgow, as a work of art in its own right. It didn't depict an old church or cathedral, ruins, gravestones or whatever, it was an imaginative piece. It might have been shown at the School of Art Club but sadly there are no surviving catalogues of any of the early Club exhibitions

SDR – Was that even before The Four?

Yes, these exhibitions existed before The Four were together; Mackintosh exhibited his Italian watercolours in 1891 in the School of Art Club and that's when James Guthrie made his famous comment to Newbery 'this man should be an artist not an architect'. I have assumed that *The Harvest Moon* would have been shown in 1892, given the importance that Mackintosh seemed to give to it; after all, if it was good enough for him to give to Keppie, his boss, then I am sure that Mackintosh would have put it in the School of Art Club in 1892. It shows a harvest moon, it's dated 1892, so I think it's safe to assume it was painted in September 1892 when the harvest moon appears; the School of Art Club's exhibitions were usually in November, so I'm sure that Mackintosh put it into the 1892 exhibition. And gave it to Keppie after that in 1894,



Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Harvest Moon*, 1892, watercolour, 35.2 x 27.6 cm, Glasgow School of Art

according to the inscription on it. And I would assume that the two Macdonald sisters saw it at the 1892 exhibition and possibly had some work in it themselves – again the catalogue doesn't exist. But at the same time as Mackintosh was likely painting *The Harvest Moon* he was also working on the interiors of the Glasgow Art Club; specifically, in the autumn of 1892 the Art Club was discussing the decoration of the big gallery at the back. And it's for that big gallery, where the fireplaces are a tour-de-force showing a lot of influence of Keppie, that Mackintosh draws two unnaturally elongated figures for the doors. They're elongated to fit the narrow panels of the door frame, form following function. But did he also exhibit these drawings in the 1892 School of Art Club exhibition? Perhaps not but they became public knowledge when they were published in the summer of 1893 in *The Bailie*, when the sisters might have seen them for the first time.

And if they were shown in 1892, then it changes a lot of emphasis about what the sisters saw and what they didn't see. And for MacNair, come to that. MacNair would have presumably seen the Glasgow Art Club drawings as he was in the same office, and perhaps they inspired his picture called *The Lovers*. We don't know what its real title is. I found it in the 1960s when I was working in Liverpool and I called it *The Lovers* because it's obviously what they were up to.

SDR – Frances Macdonald's painting the Ill Omen, 1893 has echoes of the strange symbolism of The Harvest Moon.

I'm still not sure about the exact position of *Ill Omen*, time-wise, because by November of 1893 the sisters are including emaciated women on those invitation cards and programmes for the SOA Club. There is some suggestion that there were similar figures in the paintings that they were producing for the SOA Club, but we don't know what they are; the description in *The Magazine* by young Lucy Raeburn does not fit any surviving pictures. There were obviously a lot more pictures than those we know about. *Ill Omen* doesn't quite fit the style of the SOA works but its single figure, the trees and the imaginative landscape to me suggests that she had seen *Harvest Moon* and as the sisters probably didn't know Mackintosh before late-1893 they must have seen it in an exhibition. *Ill Omen* is very much a student work, but it doesn't fit the Art School curriculum, which was

much more controlled than what you expect an art school curriculum to be. Imaginative composition was probably not allowed until their fourth year so whether Frances did it for one of Newbery's summer projects or whether she just did it for herself, I don't know. She signed and dated it *Frances Macdonald 1893*, so she obviously meant it to be exhibited, and it's big enough to be shown. It's one of the biggest, apart from those two huge panels – she did one and Mackintosh did the other – it's one of the biggest Spook School paintings.

SDR – where does it slot in

Obviously it is 1893 – is it late summer? I would guess it was painted before they saw Toorop in September 1893.

SDR – Was that The Three Brides?

That was in *The Studio* in the sixth issue. I'm sure that *The Studio* would have been devoured by The Four and their contemporaries because it was the first journal that gave equal billing to the decorative and the fine arts, or at least was the first regularly available. The Art School subscribed to it and Newbery was a supporter of it as it fitted in with his ideas that people, especially his students, should have opportunities to look at all forms of art, practical or decorative arts as well as the so called fine arts.

I don't think that *Ill Omen* was painted from life, from a model. I'm convinced that Frances was working from one of the casts in the Art School. I've said the Chartres Cathedral casts, I'm not sure when the Art School acquired those, but there are various casts like that in the School that may well have been available to Frances. It's such a straightforward medieval image, there's no animation to it, she's not flying she's just standing there. And let's not forget Frances was only 19, it's an accomplished piece of work, it's got its faults but you tend to ignore them because it's such an immediate and powerful image.

SDR – Jan Toorop's The Three Brides, 1893 played a big influence in the work of The Four. Another influence was Walter Crane's illustration of a gesso panel in The Studio, c1893.

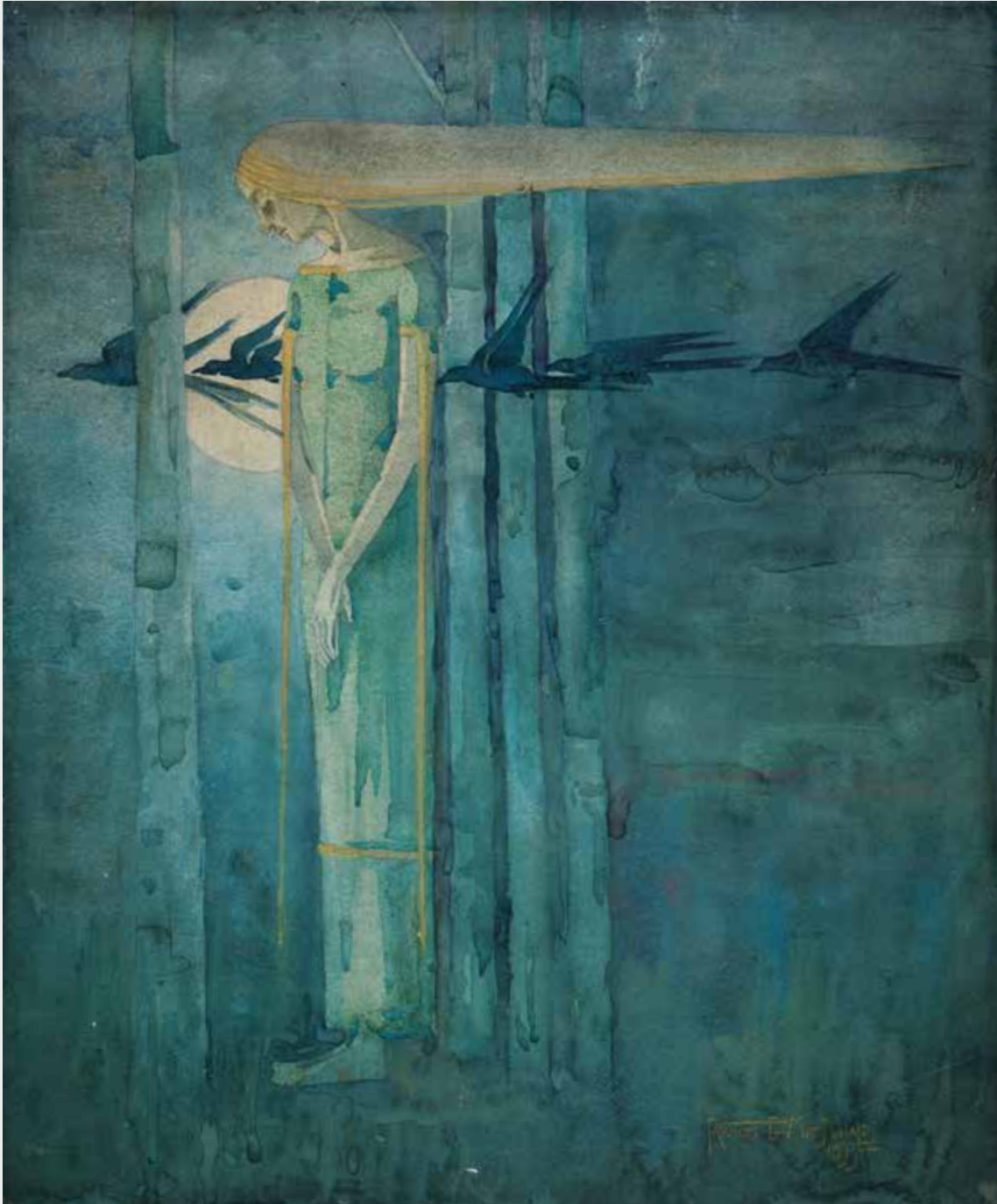
Well, the Toorop connection is well known, but what nobody ever mentions, I mean all of the previous commentators, is that the illustration of the painting was a line engraving. I reproduced it in colour to show the pastel that it is, grey and black and pinky sepia but the line engraving is closer to what the sisters did in the 1893 School of

Art Club graphics because there's no modelling, no shading. Just a schema. Accompanying the reproduction was a critique of the painting, and its author was definitely encouraging young people to break away from recording what's around them and work on more imaginative subjects; and I'm sure that the sisters were as much influenced in what they wanted to do, in what they went on to do, by what was written, as they were by the picture itself which affected the way they drew and what they drew. It is an incredible image; George Rawson gave a very good description of it in his thesis about Newbery. Everything flows from it in a lot of the Spook School drawings, although the later ones and particularly Mackintosh's *The Tree of Personal Effort* and so on, become more like a Paul Klee drawing, a pencil going for a walk. I'm sure other artists were influenced by this Toorop drawing – John Duncan and, probably, Phoebe Traquair also saw it and were affected in terms of pattern rather than content. Whereas I think the sisters responded to the women – I don't think there's a man in the picture, if there is, he is really up to no good; it's about the choices facing women. That's not to say that's those were the choices which were facing the Macdonalds, become a whore or become a nun, but it was the sort of classic choice, Adam and Eve type thing. And you can see certainly good and evil at force. How many apples are there here? There are more apples in The Four's early pictures than there are roses, but we don't talk about the Glasgow Apple.

But you asked about other *Studio* influences. I'm sure there were many, perhaps not as dramatic as *The Three Brides*, but in the second issue, May 1893, Walter Crane contributed an article on the uses of gesso, not just in frame decoration but in picture-making too. Newbery was a friend of Crane, and invited him to lecture at the School, so I feel sure that this article would have been noted by The Four and might have been the spur to use gesso at Ingram Street in 1900. Certainly, one of the panels illustrated has more than a slight connection to both Ingram Street panels, by Margaret and Mackintosh.

SDR – Cabbages in an Orchard, 1894, you say that this has some links to the Glasgow Boys and Mackintosh wrote a short essay explaining the work to counter criticism of The Four.

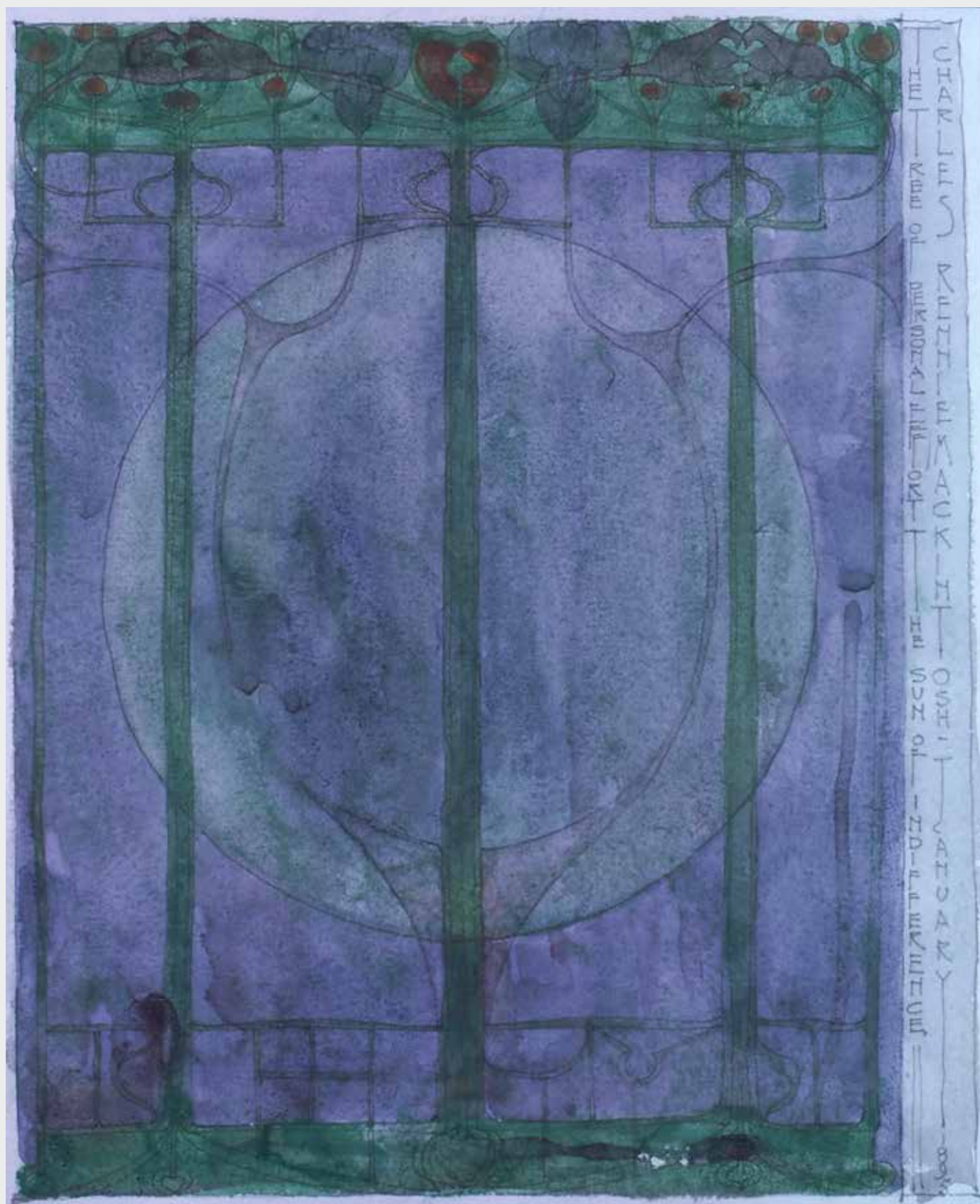
I've often said that it's a joke, because it is amusing. But when you stop and consider



Frances Macdonald,
*Ill Omen or Girl in the
East Wind with Ravens
Passing the Moon*, 1894,
pencil and watercolour,
51.7 x 42.7 cm,
The Hunterian,
University of Glasgow



Walter Crane, Illustration
of a gesso panel in
The Studio, c1893



Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *The Tree of Personal Effort*, 1895,
pencil and watercolour painted area, 21.1 x 17.4 cm,
sheet area 32.2 x 23.6 cm
Glasgow School of Art

what Mackintosh was saying then I began to think about it in relation to what The Four were going through and, OK the press was attacking their work, but somebody was feeding the press. The press was not normally going to go to the Glasgow School of Art Club exhibition, nor was it going to report on student going-on.

SDR – Do you think this was deliberate?

I'm sure that what The Four were doing was not popular either with their so-called friends or with some of the staff in the School of Art, because it went against just about everything that the formal curriculum was providing. The Four had a dual life, they are all winning prizes for toeing the line of what the South Kensington system and the School of Art itself wanted, and then they're producing these private things which they put into *The Magazine*, or they put into the School of Art Club exhibitions. Now, the curriculum products have disappeared, so we don't know why they won prizes – if they really were any good or whether they were just on a level with their contemporaries.

SDR – They were just toeing the line, but this was what they wanted to do.

Exactly. So I began to read Mackintosh's text more carefully and realised that he was actually trying to say something quite serious. But what's he trying to say, he dismisses at the end, as if he wants to tread a careful line. If this is too difficult for you, he says, it's really just about seeing cabbages growing. Cabbages is a link to the Glasgow Boys because he would have known that people would have seen their painting of cabbages in gardens and fields. I mean, the Kailyard school was a term not applied specifically to the Glasgow Boys but to other artists who were following them doing the same kind of work – painting country life, the life of the poor rather than the life of the rich farmer – but they did it in a more sentimentalised way than the Boys. So, the cabbages would be an image that people would understand; there is a wonderful line that says these are cabbages growing in an orchard but most of the people looking at the picture would never have seen a cabbage unless it was dead or not growing, in other words in a shop or on their plate in front of them. Mackintosh was including the other contributors to *The Magazine* here, as affluent students at the School of Art who wouldn't have known how cabbages grew, and here they were in an orchard. Now why are they in an orchard? Is the orchard a metaphor for the School of Art? Is he

drawing parallels between The Four, the cabbages, and their tutors and peers? As an interpretation it might be wrong, but I felt that he was getting back at the people who criticised them. And who were the people that criticised them? He's not brave enough, or stupid enough, to say – well they are our so-called betters who are our tutors and friends – but he makes the connection, I think. I'm sure The Four were not going to take criticism lying down but they were limited as students as to what they could do. It wasn't 1968, they couldn't throw stones.

SDR – Pictures by MacNair, such as The Fountain, were not illustrated in The Magazine. Was that because the illustrations would have suffered badly being reproduced in b&w.

MacNair's pictures were often very dark, they're either dark brown pastel on brown wood or they are black and blue on a black ground, and I'm sure that he would have been better known had his pictures been reproduced in colour or, even just more often. But he was, unlike the others in a way, a picture-maker. He wasn't an illustrator, he wasn't someone who was happiest working with light. I don't think Herbert MacNair is terribly good, to be honest, as a painter, and was obviously rubbish as an architect.

SDR – Although he had more exhibitions than the others.

He did have more exhibitions, because he produced far more work and he wanted to be an artist, otherwise he wouldn't have worked towards exhibitions. The others didn't have solo exhibitions (at least in the 1890s), they exhibited individual works at the RSW, The Royal Glasgow Institute of The Fine Arts (RGI) or wherever. But MacNair was living the life of an artist by making a group of works to present as a solo show. At that time that was a fairly new practice. Solo shows were started by The Fine Art Society in Bond Street in the late 1870s and 1880s. That practice of an artist putting together a group of work or simply gathering everything that was unsold in the studio and putting it on show, was relatively new and MacNair was picking up on it very quickly. And he had a very florid imagination.

SDR – You said he was the poet, he had the ideas/catalyst for other things

Yes, I'm not saying they were always very good ideas, to be honest. He certainly had, I'm sure, 'a good conceit of himself' as Scots would say and that's why he was driven to do it. And then Frances joined him, once

they were married, in having joint shows but he was the only one who lived the life of an artist as we know it, shall we say. For instance, many of the works that we remember Margaret for, after her marriage, are essentially decorative, and I don't mean that pejoratively but they were designed to be placed in a specific position as part of a concept of a complete room. She still made individual watercolours but not so many as Frances, who carried on after she married making more and more individual watercolours, enough to have exhibitions. Mackintosh never did it. He could have done it with the flower drawings, he produced 50 in Walberswick and another 20 or more in Chiddingstone and he probably did far more of them that, for one reason or another, have not survived. They were given away to people; they didn't mean anything for 50 years, so they just disappeared.

SDR- What was the catalyst for you coming to Glasgow?

While working at the Walker Art Gallery I came across MacNair in this huge bundle of stuff transferred to the gallery from the Liverpool Museum. It consisted of several portfolios of material from the Liverpool University College School of Applied arts. Most of it was by students who were not terribly good, often made by young ladies who were passing time before they got married. Some of them had a talent, but what they made didn't go beyond their own circle. Anyway, there were a few things by MacNair in the middle of these folios and I realised that he was actually much more interesting than any of his contemporaries in the school. I couldn't find out anything about him, nothing about MacNair in Howarth. So I wrote to Andrew McLaren Young in Glasgow to say that I had seen the Mackintosh exhibition in Edinburgh in 1968, enjoyed it very much, we have this problem, blah blah blah. I got a letter back from a pal of mine who had been at the Courtauld with me and who was a research assistant here at the university and he said 'I can tell you something about MacNair, but how are you doing, what are you up to' and I wrote back and said I've been here a couple of years now and I'm thinking of moving on. He wrote back and said, well there are two jobs here being merged into one. One of them is a senior lectureship and one of them is a research assistantship. With any luck they will merge them at about £2000 per annum, are you interested? Robin was a research assistant, this is Robin Spencer, in the Whistler Research Project at the University. He was going off to St Andrews to work as a



James Herbert MacNair, *The Lovers*, 1893, pencil and watercolour, 23.5 x 14.6 cm, untraced

lecturer in the newly set up an Art History department, one of the many that happened in the late '60s. So eventually I did come to Glasgow. I didn't get £2,000, I got half that – a junior lecturer's salary – but the reason I came to Glasgow was not Mackintosh but the fact that they were building a new art gallery, and because there had been only one art gallery and one exhibition space opened in Britain since the war – a tiny little gallery at Christchurch College in Oxford and the Hayward. And the National Gallery in London was gradually modernising its galleries and so

the science of that I found intriguing – how you build to protect paintings – I've always been interested in conservation. And so I came to Glasgow specifically because of the new gallery; there were lots of things in the collection here that I knew very little about, such as the print collection that is an absolutely fantastic collection of 15th, 16th, 17th century Italian prints. They were not my main area of interest but they were part of my responsibility too. Fortunately, there were other people on the teaching side who were happy to research that collection and make small exhibitions from it. My interest

was the post-1860 British artists, some of whom McLaren Young had begun to buy as adjuncts to the Whistler collection, but the 1920s–1950s were what I was most interested in at that time. So my province, apart from the collection administration, involved me in buying contemporary work to add to the collection, cataloguing the Mackintosh collection, extending the modern British 20th century artists in the collection, and working on the art gallery. The art gallery eventually became almost a full time job, especially after McLaren Young died at the beginning of 1975. So that's why I came to Glasgow – but, yes, I found MacNair in Liverpool where he had enjoyed being the king pin, he enjoyed being the man all the girls flocked to, and everything else. I'm not saying he was a philanderer or anything like that but he was slightly full of himself with the security of having a private income. He worked in the School of Applied Arts which was attached to the School of Architecture in the University – it wasn't even a university then, it was a university college – and its aim was to train people who would produce the sculpture and the murals and everything else that would add to an Edwardian building. Eventually the university decided it could spend its money elsewhere and made an offer to the city council, which had a similar facility in the School of Art, but less well endowed with talented staff, to close its own department and make its staff available to the city. Now MacNair and one or two others working with him decided they were far too grand to go and work in the municipal Art School so they set up a private art school, an atelier, on their own, which was fine so long as he had private money. But all of a sudden his family business collapsed and he no longer had money and he was in a job where he had no salary; he had no income other than from the pictures he sold and from the students he managed to persuade to take classes from him. It didn't work, for a variety of reasons, and he took solace in the bottle and one thing led to another.

SDR – In The Studio Gleeson White also praised Mackintosh's decorative schemes for the Buchanan Street Tea Rooms

Yes, very much he did and he thought they were wonderful. And he did make a link with one of the exhibits in London in 1896. He remembered Mackintosh showing that little drawing *Part Seen, Imagined Part* and he said surely that was the basis for these huge totem like women in the ladies' luncheon

room; and yes it was, but it goes back further as that one figure was descended from a poster which was in itself descended from another watercolour in *The Magazine*. The whole point about what The Four were doing, in a way, was that they were translating; they saw no boundaries between making a watercolour suitable to send to the RSW, to making a mirror based on the imagery of that watercolour, to making a series of book illustrations. An illustration is way down the scale in terms of traditional 'importance' in the visual arts; books and magazines and making posters were often seen as commercial art and serious artists don't get involved, except that it was a time when serious artists like Lautrec, Steinlen and Mucha did get involved in posters and The Four were there at the very beginning. They showed their posters in Paris and in Reims and with Alex Reid here in Glasgow and at the Aquarium in London, they showed alongside all of these great poster makers. One Mackintosh poster turned up on the market in Paris from a French private collection, presumably bought from the Paris exhibition. That's what The Four did, they saw no barriers between all of the different disciplines of art that Newbery had encouraged them to pursue and Gleeson White got half the story. He made a small leap but he didn't extend it the full way or really develop the fact that commercial art, posters and wall decorations, stencilling were all part of the same kind of art-making for The Four. In fact, he hardly included any of the pictures that The Four made alongside their applied arts pieces.

SDR – White identifies MacNair as the poet, philosopher and mystic of the group. He mentions, Maurice Maeterlinck, Gustave Moreau and Fernand Khnopff in his analysis of MacNair's work.

Yes, he did and most of these people had been in *The Studio*; Khnopff is an incredible painter, a Belgian, and a lot of his work appeared in *The Studio*. And of all of The Four, MacNair was the one who responded. Khnopff's work is often murky, they're usually dark, and MacNair picked up on that and when he failed to find the ideas he was looking for in other people's writings, he wrote it himself, often in verse – which makes it even more impossible to decipher what he's drawing because it's his own make believe language, not unlike Tolkien, or even Harry Potter. He lived in this imagined world.

Part 2 of the interview will follow in the next Journal.



Charles Rennie Mackintosh, *Part Seen, Imagined Part*, 1896, pencil and watercolour, 39 x 19.5 cm, Glasgow Museums

Dr Robyne Calvert explores the artistic partnership between Mackintosh and his wife.

The *Künstlerpaar*: Mackintosh, Macdonald & *The Rose Boudoir*

After a century of scholarship we are still intrigued, and somewhat perplexed, by Mackintosh's working relationship with his wife and artistic partner Margaret Macdonald. In this article Dr Robyne Calvert, Mackintosh Research Fellow at the Glasgow School of Art, explores love and art in their shared lives.

Toshie and Margaret. They were very close indeed. You never saw one without the other. They always did absolutely everything together, hand in glove throughout their lives.

Lady Alice Barnes, talking to Alistair Moffat, 1986¹

No-one denies that Macdonald played a critical role in Mackintosh's world, but to what extent her influence was felt in his work is still a matter of debate. Lack of documentary evidence, as well as the shifting poles of scholarship from early 20th century patriarchal to more recent feminist outlooks, has muddied this subject even further. Modernist critics like P. Morton Shand were derisive of Mackintosh's more decorative interiors, and famously blamed Macdonald for a perceived lapse into 'feminine' style. Shand's disdain was clear when he wrote to William Davidson in 1933: 'Outside of her circle of loyal friends in Glasgow and Chelsea her work is either unknown, or long since forgotten; and the future is scarcely likely to see her rather thin talent restored to a place of honour.'² More recent scholarship has sought to recognise Macdonald's influence as deserving of authorial credit; or conversely, to show that she wasn't qualitatively capable enough to produce the designs for which she has been attributed in some of the interiors.³

A reader would be reasonable to ask: why does this debate matter? Can we not just accept that they *did* work together, and that we might never know exactly how their collaboration worked? And it would be a valid point, yet we are still compelled by the mystery. This short essay doesn't offer any validity to either side, but rather presents a glance at the scant evidence of their partnership, then a closer look at a particular interior, *The Rose Boudoir* [fig. 1], in order to gain a bit more insight into this Mackintosh-Macdonald quandary.

To begin, though, let's recap what little we do know. In a rare and often repeated example, on the 12th of July 1900, mere months before the pair married, Mackintosh wrote to his friend, the German architect and author Hermann Muthesius, about the Ingram Street Lunch and Tea Rooms commission: 'Just now, we are working on two large panels for the frieze... Miss Margaret Macdonald is doing

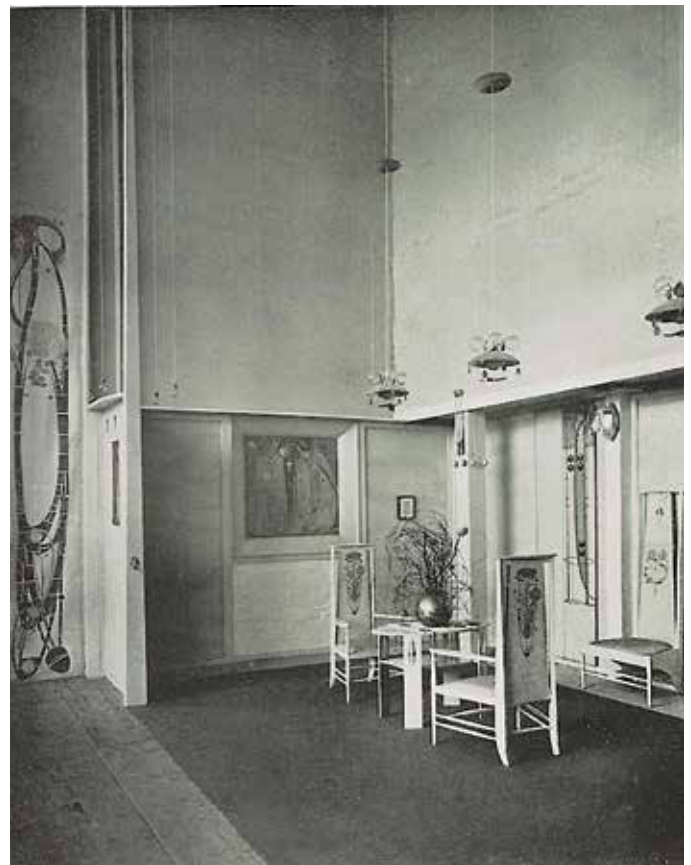


Fig. 1 Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Rose Boudoir*, International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin 1902 (Photo: *Deutsche Kunst und Dekoration* no. 10, 1902, p. 589)

one and I am doing the other. We are working them together and that makes the work very pleasant.¹⁴ What does this mean? Did they move back and forth between them, sharing ideas, hints, adding touches to each other's work? What does 'together' signify for these two? Muthesius, with intimate understanding of his friends, dubbed them the *künstlerpaar* – the art couple.

The only other verifiable evidence of Mackintosh's own words on his working relationship with Macdonald are found in the remaining letters that he wrote to her during his stay in France in 1927 (hers are unfortunately lost): 'You must remember that in all my architectural efforts you have been half if not threequarters [sic] in them...'¹⁵ The context for this oft-quoted remark is often omitted: he was writing Macdonald to ask her if she would give a short interview to Christian Barman of *The Architect's Journal* before his pending trip to Glasgow, and he was assuring her that she was fully capable of discussing his architectural designs. This is perhaps questionable evidence that Macdonald was a collaborator in these efforts, but it would seem to indicate, at least in Mackintosh's eyes, that she was quite a significant source of influence, if not an outright artistic partner.

Mackintosh's letters are evidence of his abiding affection for Macdonald even in the waning years of his life, but little else of their practice together is revealed there. And so we are left to scrutinise their work to try and determine how their artistic partnership worked. We can perhaps agree it was born out of creative camaraderie, aesthetic sympathies, and the imaginative pleasure that flowed naturally from their artistic educations, stylistic development and their close personal relationship. They worked together not out of necessity: Glasgow had a rich offering of artisans, and Mackintosh employed them to construct his buildings, create his furniture, and paint the walls of his decorative interiors. The Mackintoshes worked together because they desired to do so, and as a consequence, we might be unsurprised that one of the themes underpinning much of their collaborative work is romantic love.

This theme is intermingled with the bolder philosophical subjects of life and death cycles, which can be found repeatedly in the Symbolist narratives they crafted together, particularly in the spaces for which Macdonald contributed art and design. At the Ingram Street Tearoom, *The May Queen* and *The Wassail* sat opposite each other representing summer and winter respectively, the death and rebirth of the seasons. The *Salon de Luxe* at The Willow Tea Rooms offered a programme based on Rossetti's 'Willowood' sonnets of love lost, death, the afterlife, and letting go. Slumbering princesses (in rest or in death?) find their way into other of Macdonald's art; and signs of nature blooming and fading abound in Mackintosh's architecture. And in both their work, woman (and sometimes man) are conflated with plants and trees to present the fecundity of the natural world, to which we are all connected.

In examining these recurring motifs, *A Rose Boudoir* deserves closer scrutiny. Perhaps more than any other, this room is exemplary of the allegorical interest in romantic love. Created for the 1902 International Exhibition of Modern Art in Turin, it is perhaps its ephemeral nature that deeper interpretation of this space has been overlooked. It exists for us only in a few grainy black and white photos, and its component parts – a slightly eclectic mix curated by Mackintosh – have long been dispersed.¹⁶ But for six months these pieces comprised a boudoir – a lady's sitting room where she might receive intimate friends and relations. It was a shallow, wide space, coloured in pinks and lavenders against a creamy white background. The lighting, which Mackintosh cleverly hung at the height of the display (to detract from the high ceiling of the exhibition hall), cast a soft glow around a pastel interior decorated with art, items of furniture, ceramics, and textiles by



Fig. 2 Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The White Rose & the Red Rose*, 1902. Painted gesso on hessian, set with glass beads and shell, 99 x 101.5 cm. The Hunterian, University of Glasgow 2018.



Fig. 3 Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Heart of the Rose*, 1902. Painted plaster panel, 96.8 x 94 cm. The Glasgow School of Art 2018.

both artists. At left and right were Macdonald's gesso panels *The White Rose and the Red Rose* [fig. 2 – Glasgow version] and *The Heart of the Rose*, [fig. 3 – Glasgow version] facing each other across the expanse.¹⁷ In the centre left of the room were two white high-backed chairs and oval table topped with an elaborate round bowl of flowers designed by Macdonald. Just behind this and to the right sat a writing cabinet [fig. 4], designed by Mackintosh, with three more small panels by Macdonald set into it. While the rose theme was carried out through the entire decor in style or subject, it was these three key objects—the gessos, and writing cabinet—which related an allegorical tale of the union between pure and passionate love.

The characters' story unfolds book-like from left to right. At left hung *The White Rose and the Red Rose*. The 'White Rose' stands at centre, and behind her the 'Red Rose' leans in gently, whispering in her ear. The second panel is *The Dreaming Rose*, found in the left-hand door of the writing desk. Here we find the 'White Rose' sleeping, visions of infants hovering decoratively on either side of her head, her blooming form tinged in the red of *Passionate Love*. Inside the cabinet is a small silver panel, *The Spirit of Love*. We see just half of a face with a red rosebud lying gently next to it. The developing child sleeps peacefully under a blanket, the cabinet itself an anthropomorphic metaphor for its mother's womb. In the right cabinet door is *The Awakened Rose*. The 'White Rose' is in full bloom, her body round as she carries a child within. Finally, in *The Heart of the Rose* the 'White Rose' stands holding a newborn infant, swaddled in a red blanket formed as a rose. The 'Red Rose' stands quietly to her right, and they gaze down serenely at the child, the joyous conclusion of the union.

What has been lost to the ephemeral nature of the space might have been recognisable to those attending the exhibition. But even then, it might have been more likely that, like in Symbolist painting, these interiors merely came together to suggest thematic notions, rather than any sustained contemplation of unfolding narratives – especially given that the inspiration for these motifs may have been deeply personal. The gessoes have come to be known as singular works, rather than sisters, appreciated for their individual beauty, but also suffering from misinterpretation—particularly in the case of *The Heart of the Rose*, which some have taken as representing Macdonald's unfulfilled desire for a child. The distance from the narrative that comes together in *The Rose Boudoir* underscores this reading. For although the story of *The Rose Boudoir* might have a similar interpretation, as a unified work it also allows for perhaps bolder readings: should we consider the symbolism of the white and red rose in British tradition, the union of England and Scotland (and Macdonald was English by birth); or might we even consider that this could be a Symbolist presentation of the Annunciation story, for there is precedent in depicting Christian narratives in the work of the Macdonald sisters. Or perhaps even simply the fecundity of a creative union, the rose representing that artistic spark found between the *künstlerpaar*. Like other interiors of Mackintosh's design, we must consider that this space was curated to be a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and the placement of these panels in such an order as to be read was not accidental.

But these gesso panels, are also important for the technical information they reveal about the Mackintosh's creative practice. When Mackintosh sent these works to Turin, he indicated on the manifest that 'duplicates only' were available for sale. And of course most readers will know there are in fact two versions of each of these panels. While the Turin set were made in warm red tones, the other two versions, both in Glasgow, had the same design but with different palette and surface detail. The Glasgow *The White Rose and the Red Rose* [fig. 2] hung above the mantle in the Mackintoshes' home, and can now be seen in the Mackintosh House at the Hunterian Art Gallery; and the Glasgow *The Heart of the Rose* [fig. 3] was placed in a mantle above the fireplace that Wylie Hill, a relative of Jessie Newbery, commissioned from Mackintosh for his home in Lilybank Terrace, Glasgow, in 1902. This version is now on display at the Glasgow School of Art, and has recently had some noteworthy conservation work as part of the GSA Collection Recovery Project. Previously it was assumed that these versions were created from a cartoon or template, each hand made, but it was difficult to tell which set came first, or even if they were made simultaneously. But in fact recent conservation by Graciela Ainsworth Conservation Studio in Edinburgh has shown

that the GSA panel is in fact not a gesso as we have come to understand Macdonald's technique, but rather a traditional plaster cast that has been painted. Although Ainsworth's team found this as the result of technical analysis, this fact can be readily observed by comparing identical surface cracks in each version, which proves that a mould was made from the first panel – in this case the Turin one.⁸ This may seem like a minor technical point, but when considered alongside Mackintosh's note that duplicates could be ordered, it reminds us that Mackintosh carefully curated this space to show both that he and Macdonald could be commissioned to do entire rooms, but were also very happy to have individual pieces sold on their own merit.

The Rose Boudoir, as a collection of objects and a as a curated space, exemplifies the difficulties in understanding the Mackintosh-Macdonald partnership, but perhaps opens more questions than it answers. Was this merely a sort of pick-a-mix of items of their singular or collaborative creation? Was it easy to curate such a unified space because of the likeminded repetition of themes? Did Macdonald have her say in the selection, and were the gessoes and cabinet, very clearly made as a group due to their combined narrative, something that the two conceived of together? And of course these point to even larger questions. Might we consider that the *Gesamtkunstwerk* philosophy was not just present in the work they co-created, gesso panels and interiors poetically and significantly entwined, but manifested in their very lives as two singular artists working in concert?

Perhaps on this significant anniversary date, we 'scholars' might simply consider what most readers already accept: we are seduced by the designs of a creative couple that were passionately in love with each other. We might acknowledge that love was their core their inspiration: that the beauty, the sensuality, and the eroticism of these works may just signify that these two vibrant artists were besotted – their interiors elegant, ethereal, and symbolic mediators of their artistic partnership. They were affected by each other. And now we are drawn to the effect of their affection.

1. Alistair Moffat, "Lady Alice Barnes, talking to Alistair Moffat, 1986", *Remembering Charles Rennie Mackintosh* (Lanark: Colin Baxter Photography Ltd. 1989), 103.
2. P. Morton Shand in a letter to William Davidson, dated 31st March, 1933, Hunterian Art Gallery Archives, University of Glasgow.
3. See Janice Helland, "Collaboration Amongst the Four," in *Charles Rennie Mackintosh (Catalogue of the Exhibition)*, ed. Wendy Kaplan (London: Abbeville Press in association with Glasgow Museums, 1996); see also: Roger Billcliffe, "Mackintosh Furniture... Revisited," *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History* 12 (2007): 7–14.
4. Letter from Mackintosh to Hermann Muthesius, 12 July 1900, p. 1. Werkbundarchiv, Museum der Dinge, Berlin.
5. Letter from Mackintosh to Margaret Macdonald, 16 May 1927. Reprinted in Pamela Robertson, ed. *The Chronycle: The Letters of Charles Rennie Mackintosh to Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, 1927* (Glasgow: Hunterian Art Gallery, University of Glasgow, 2001), 56.
6. While much of the furniture is in the Hunterian collection, the writing cabinet is now in the collection of the MAK in Vienna; and readers will remember that ten years ago, on 30 April 2008, these two larger gessoes went to auction. Originally owned by Fritz Wärndorfer, patron of the Vienna Secessionists, they seemed to have gone with him when he left Austria for Chicago in 1914, and were until this auction in the Taffner private collection in New York. *The White Rose and the Red Rose* sold at Christies for a record £1.7 million pounds. At the same auction, *The Heart of the Rose* was sold for a comparatively meagre sum of just under £500,000, less than a third of its partners price. And after 106 years of hanging as a pair, these panels now reside in two different private collections.
7. The panels illustrated here are not the ones seen in Turin, but rather the other versions in Glasgow collections, discussed further in this essay. Space does not allow for all four to be represented, however the Turin versions can be seen online at christies.com.
8. Many thanks to Graciela Ainsworth for her research insights, which will be published in greater detail in future.



Fig. 4 Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, Writing Cabinet, 1902. Ebonised wood with inlaid panels of metal and painted gesso, 148 x 124 x 30 cm. MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art (MAK), Vienna. Photo © MAK

Fig. 1 Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, *The Rose Boudoir*, International Exhibition of Modern Decorative Art, Turin 1902, *The Studio*, 26, 1902, p. 92, © The Hunterian, University of Glasgow, 2018

The Mackintosh Novel

Karen Grol became interested in Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his work twenty-one years ago. Now she has written a biographical novel about the architect, entitled 'Mackintoshs Atem' – literally translated as Mackintosh's breath. It will be published in Germany in her native tongue in June 2018. Here, in translation, she offers a glimpse of the questions and insights which emerged during her research.

It's not easy to draw a tower if tourists are blocking your view. Sicily, April 15th, 1891. Equipped with a sketch pad, Charles Rennie Mackintosh positions himself in front of La Martorana. About 50 people stare at him; in desperation, he tries to shoo them away. He fails. Will he have more success after he has learned a few words of Italian? In the evening of that same day, he gets an Italian lesson from Emile, who is allegedly the hotel proprietor's son.

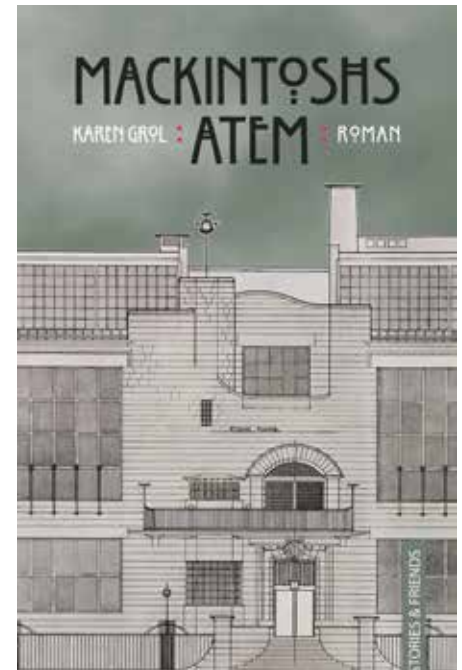
For a novelist who wants to remain true to her subject, the surviving evidence gives rise to many questions. How did the lesson in Italian come about? Did Mackintosh make friends easily? Did Ernesto Ragusa, whose family had founded the hotel and restaurant industry in Palermo, take him under his wing? At the time, Ragusa not only owned Hotel Trinacria but also the top address in town, the Grand Hotel et des Palmes. He attended a hotel management school in Germany, and spoke English as well as German. He was a passionate entomologist and, unfortunately, already a widower. He had no son named Emile. So is it Emilio, his brother-in-law, who is teaching Mackintosh Italian that evening?

Despite tangible clues, documents, memories and letters, it is not easy to trace the everyday details which may, in their course, reveal so much. It is not enough to study Mackintosh's artistic output in order to understand him. What did he experience? Whom did he meet? How did that influence him? How exactly did it all happen?

On April 16th, 1891, Mackintosh cannot have missed the excitement surrounding the wedding of local aristocrat, Giulio Maria Tomasi di Lampedusa. All of Palermo is turned upside down. The secondary residence of the Lampedusa Family is located directly adjacent to Hotel Trinacria. Young Tomasi, who happens to have been born in the same year as Mackintosh, comes from one of the most important aristocratic families of Sicily. Years later, Giuseppe, his son, will write the famous novel *The Leopard*. Marriage may be in the air, but did Mackintosh's mind turn over thoughts of weddings; he hardly seems to miss Jessie Keppie on his journey. Nevertheless, he will be engaged only a few months after his return from Italy. Did the weeks he spent alone awaken a desire for togetherness?

Then he arrives in Siena. Mackintosh's unexpected encounter with his colleagues, James Paxton and Robert Dods, on May 10th, 1891, belongs to the same category of coincidences I find fascinating. Together the young men continue their journey and, in Florence, meet the Kings, world travellers from Ohio.¹ Is it love at first sight when the oldest daughter, Mary Mariam King, and Robert Dods meet? They only have a few days to get to know each other. The three men travel on to Pisa; the Kings go to Naples. In 1899 Mary and Robert get married. It is more than likely that Mackintosh also met Mary.

To tell the story of an extraordinary architect involves familiarisation with those who knew him, loved him, supported him, and those who put obstacles in his path. Some encounters were accidental and only fleeting. Others developed into close bonds and friendships that lasted for many years, some of them for life. Wenman Joseph Basset-Lowke, Walter Wilfried Blackie, Desmond Chapman-Huston, Kate Cranston, William Davidson, John Duncan Fergusson, Patrick and Anna Geddes, Josef Hoffmann, E.O. Hoppé, John Keppie, Herbert and Frances MacNair, Margaret Macdonald, Margaret Morris, Talwin Morris, Hermann and Anna Muthesius, Francis and Jessie Newbery, Josef Maria Olbrich, Randolph and Birdie Schwabe, Fritz and Lili Wärndorfer ... Mackintosh's Who's Who is impressively extensive. All of them have their own stories, stories about unforgotten artists, whose creativity amazes us even today, about courageous business people who dared to do extraordinary things, about idealists who stuck to their guns. Without them,



art would be poorer, without them the road Toshie and Margaret went down would have taken a different turn.

We can never actually know the whole story. The correlations are still a mystery and there are speculations about acquaintances. The advantage of a novel is obvious: a scenic narrative; dialogue as a subtle and exciting means to convey historical fact; and creative, fictional treatment to fill the gaps, explore possibility and create interest. Fiction is never biography, but it can use careful and informed speculation and conjecture to explore its subject in a way in which historical research alone may not. Toshie and Margaret meet Gustav Klimt in autumn of 1900. Do they happen to run into him during the Vienna Secession or are they introduced to him? Is the Austrian painter as taken by Margaret as Fritz Wärndorfer is? We may never know, but a novel can speculate. *Mackintoshs Atem* takes the liberty of telling the story the way it could have been. The facts – the letters, exhibitions, records, documents and newspaper articles – provide the framework for a story, whose gaps are cautiously filled with fiction.

Many artists shared the same fate. Mackintosh was not alone in meeting obstacles. Others, too, aspired to independence and free development as artists, resisting more or less successfully the dictates of academic teachings, artistic trends, public opinion, the desires of supervisors and customers. Mackintosh questioned what was considered valid in architecture. Not only in Scotland.

The conservatives preached neoclassicism and followed the doctrines of the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. The English arts & crafts movement demanded that art be useful and sensible. Mackintosh believed that there is no art without imagination. The German and Austrian art scenes gazed at Glasgow with fascination or even incredulity. Despite a spirit of optimism, artists were bound to face resistance. The freedom of the arts quickly became too expensive for anyone not blessed with a generous financial cushion. And many a cushion dwindled over the years.

Failure is as much a part of life as success. It is not necessarily a sign of weakness. It requires courage to take unpopular stances, unusual paths or risks, to reject compromises, to lead a life beyond the mainstream – back then as much as today. Failure – and re-invention – can be a valid approach.

Toshie and Margaret saw failure strike others in their circle: the MacNairs' attempts to gain a foothold as artists after leaving Liverpool University and to generate an independent and permanent income are unsuccessful. Even Herbert MacNair's imposed emigration to Canada fails. He returns to Scotland sooner than expected. They have no luck in Glasgow. Frances Macdonald MacNair's early death may even have been suicide.

In 1903, Mackintosh's friend, Hermann Muthesius, returns to Berlin and to a scandal that arises due to his demands for a new objectivity. His criticism of the design and quality of German art products is known today as "the Muthesius Case". In the end it results in the formation of the *Werkbund*, the German association of craftsmen. Despite Muthesius's early influence on German reform efforts, despite his untiring work on constructions, and despite his publications, after World War One Muthesius increasingly turns into a mere observer and is nearly forgotten by the 1920s. Shortly before his fatal accident in 1927 he laments the fact that the new architectural avant-garde pretends that there never was a reform movement.²

What some call failure is frequently a necessary change, an adjustment of one's situation in life to changing circumstances. When Margaret and Toshie leave Glasgow in 1914 to recuperate in Walberswick, another friend of theirs turns his back on his homeland. The man who hired the Mackintoshes to furnish and decorate the music salon in his Viennese villa in 1902 leaves Vienna to go to America. Beyond all

clichés he gives himself a new identity as a progressive patron. His commitment to art serves as self-liberation.³ This is successful, but his impressive art collection, which includes works of art by Klimt, letters from Aubrey Beardsley, works by Georg Minne and Koloman Moser as well as the interior design of his Viennese Villa, which bears Mackintosh's signature, is split up and sold. Fritz Wärndorfer becomes Fred Warndorf. He earns his money as a farmer and textile designer. He paints. He survives because his early migration saves his family from the Holocaust in World War Two.

Mackintosh also re-invented himself several times. When he can no longer build, he begins to paint, initially for relaxation, later more systematically. His textile designs agree with the *zeitgeist* and are an important source of income. Architecture is still his great passion. Yet even when he makes his last attempt to establish himself in London as an architect, he is not willing to make any compromises. The public authorities are of the opinion that the building looks like a factory. Mackintosh refuses to add the desired ornamentation, and that's the last word. The architect, in France at the very latest, becomes a painter.

Mackintosh's staying power is strong. Margaret and Toshie have decided to live. They are prepared to suffer limitations and take new risks. First they leave Glasgow, then London, and finally they go abroad. Their financial situation and illnesses make the last stations of their journey difficult but they win. Now Toshie no longer struggles to save his reputation as an architect. He seeks a new identity as a painter. The Mackintoshes live from hand to mouth, from their love for the arts, from each other and from friendship. Wherever they go, they find friends, new friends as well as old ones. They always stay in contact with their colleagues at home. Even in the last hours of his life, Toshie is surrounded by his friends, and that is why this novel about an exceptional artist unexpectedly turns into a hymn to friendship. Toshie may have experienced only little recognition in his lifetime; his road was a winding one; it led him up and down. Yet he never had to walk it alone.

And it is friends to whom I owe my love of Mackintosh. At the end of my first trip through Scotland 21 years ago, my friends and I visit Glasgow and the Willow Tea Rooms on Sauchiehall Street. I am surprised and thrilled. We walk up to the Glasgow School of Art. I am overwhelmed.

Never have I seen such architecture; nothing looks more modern yet at the same time more traditional to me. We visited Scotland Street School and the House of an Art Lover. I cannot get enough, and so we take a drive to The Hill House in Helensburgh. Things like that shape your life. When I decided to start writing it was easy to find a topic: Mackintosh and friendship.

Author: Karen Grol

Translation: Johanna Ellsworth

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1. *A Sketch of the Life and Travels of Isaac Fenton King* by Isaac Fenton King, Ohio 1914
 2. *Hermann Muthesius und die Idee der harmonischen Kultur*, Fedor Roth, Gebr. Mann Publishing House, Berlin, Page 10.
 3. "Modernism and Jewish Identity in Early Twentieth-Century Vienna: Fritz Wärndorfer and His House for an Art Lover", Elana Shapira in *Studies in the Decorative Arts*, Spring/Summer 2006



Karel Grol would have liked to study architecture, as her father did. Instead she became a printing technology engineer, an IT consultant, a publisher and a writer. Her first novel, *Mackintosh's Atem*, will be published (in German) by Stories & Friends in June of 2018. The foreign rights are available.

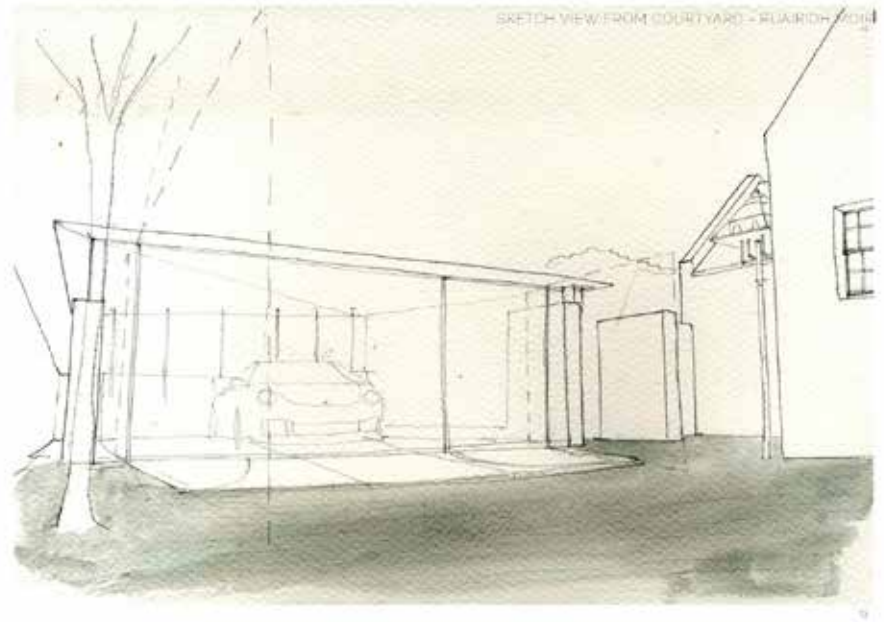
Observing Windyhill

Rhuairidh C. Moir, BARD architects, discusses his exciting commission to build a new motor garage at Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Windyhill in Kilmacolm.

Passing the threshold of Windyhill for the first time leaves a distinct and indelible impression on the imagination. My first visit occurred on a calm February evening, and was something of a revelation. As most followers of Mackintosh's work, I was familiar with The Hill House following numerous trips to the property. Although I had studied drawings and photographs of Windyhill prior to being acquainted with it, I was struck by the sense of domesticity that prevails and the effect that has on the perception of the building. The character of Windyhill is enriched by this: great art adorns the walls; meals are still prepared in the kitchen; fires flash around hearths and music drifts between rooms through a modern sound-system. This dwelling house is very much alive and evolving. This sense of habitation enhances the character, and indeed the architecture, of the house and makes one wonder how 'The Hill House' would have been perceived prior to becoming a museum.

Praise for the sanctity of Windyhill is wholly attributed to its owner David Cairns, who has exerted a great deal of effort restoring Mackintosh light fittings, stained glass elements and stencilwork, undertaken by Rab MacInnes and Linda Cannon with metalwork by John Creed. Impressive pieces of furniture have also been recreated based on originals, which were donated to the Art School by the Davidson family.

Although much of the house remains true to Mackintosh's original intention, as a lived-in dwelling, it has needed to adapt to the requirements of contemporary living. In the 1980's, a carport was added to the south-eastern corner of the site in the former drying area of the gardens. Although the previous owners have made efforts to take cues from Mackintosh's design vocabulary, it sits quite awkwardly with the main house and performs poorly in sheltering cars. It is for these reasons that it is proposed to replace the structure with a new motor garage in the same position, a commission that I am undertaking.



Working in a context as significant as Windyhill poses many challenges and obstacles. It requires a steady nerve and determination to ensure the appropriateness of one's actions. To commence this journey, I relied on prior research undertaken on Mackintosh as well as carrying out meticulous, near forensic, study of the house. Mackintosh's predilection to constantly amend his designs during construction is well known, and Windyhill was no different.

As a result of this project, the data that has been amassed on Windyhill, will undoubtedly be beneficial for the understanding of Mackintosh's work generally. By measuring and drawing the house, it has been possible to unlock certain compositional devices used by the architect. He skilfully repeats elements, geometries as well as using the golden ratio to set out key rooms in the house.

Study of Mackintosh's plans, for example, indicated that he intended the servant wing to sit lower than the main house, something which was inexplicably amended during construction. We now know that this change was likely due to the discovery of bedrock, which was dealt with by raising the floor – a pragmatic solution to the problem.

On observing Windyhill, various patterns and codes become apparent. Mackintosh uses a series of devices to choreograph and orient life within the house. For instance, he deploys stained glass and stencils in order to delineate key functions and thresholds. Blue colours are concentrated on the eastern thresholds, greens delineate the hallways and pinks

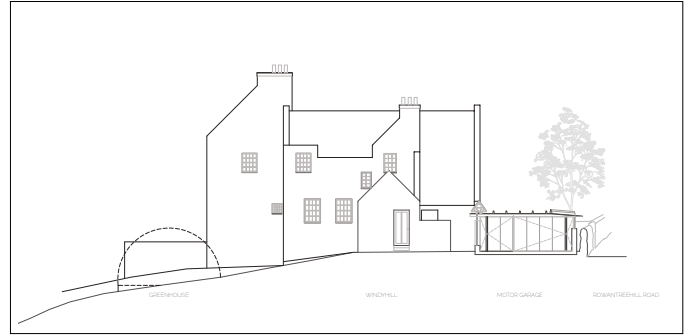
Motor Garage, Windyhill, Impression (above) and model (below).
Rhuairidh C. Moir, BARD architects



occupy the dwell spaces of the drawing room, staircase and master bedroom.

The proposal for the new motor garage looks to the origins of Mackintosh's inspirations, which provided the initial triggers for the design of the new construction. Knowing that Mackintosh was inspired by nature as a driving force for his work, the colour coding could be striated to represent the seed, the bud and the bloom of a plant. Guidance was also offered by key artworks such as *The Tree of Personal Effort* and *The Tree of Influence*, which correlate to this theme – the built embodiment of which is the impressive candelabrum in the main staircase.

Drawing on these themes allowed for the germination of the initial idea for the new construction and represented a key moment in the project. Studying Celtic art and mythology, there are examples of 'the tree of life' as a recurring theme in the decorative arts and illustrations of 8th century monks. I was particularly



Motor Garage, Windyhill, elevations and (bottom) view from Courtyard.
Rhuairidh C. Moir, BARD architects

drawn to examples of the 'potted tree of life' – it represents a tiny vessel, which can sustain the entire ecosystem of various life-forms: from microbes in earth; to a tree; fruits and even nesting birds in branches.

The new construction proposes a concrete 'pot' that is set to the ground whereupon its sides are curled upwards (referencing the levels of the adjacent boundary walls) and where two cars can sit. From this pot, long slender steel stanchions grow to support a plate steel roof, with its structural fins inverted and expressed externally. Between these, hand painted glass creates a ribbon for light to enter and refract. It will offer an apparition-like quality to the cars within and create a scintilla of subtle effects animated by the play of light. I imagine the

effect will be ever changing and mesmerizing as time progresses, as if it were a living organism. It will radiate gently outwards, in harmony with Mackintosh's candelabrum.

A finishing touch to the proposals for Windyhill is the proposal to install a new undulating and sinuous garden bench set into a node within the topography of the garden. From this position, one can look over the landscape as well as to the house itself from a position of shelter. We propose to cast the piece in the same masonry composition as the 'pot' of the motor garage, completing the narrative of germination. The retained earth around this bench will be planted with species of plants, which Mackintosh lovingly painted, though never published as intended. It will sit as an open book and tribute to the master in the setting of his own creation.

At present, the project has secured planning consent, and we are looking at the detailed design with a view to a site

start later this year. Windyhill is about to be transformed, ensuring its longevity as a domestic dwelling. The new motor garage, although built 117 years after the original, will, I anticipate, have a symbiotic relationship with Mackintosh's masterpiece yet with a defined line evident between original and new.

Whilst it is not easy (nor perhaps desirable) to convey fully the driving forces and intensions that one proposes as an architect, I hope that this article has offered some glimpses and clues to what will soon appear in Kilmacolm. Having moved to Glasgow to study architecture primarily due to Mackintosh, it is a privilege and honour to now be working on Windyhill. I look forward to results and the renewed appreciation of the house that will inevitably follow.

For more information on BARD architects please visit www.bard.scot

Charles Rennie Mackintosh – Making the Glasgow Style

‘C.R.M. (“Tosh” as he was called among us)... always contended very strongly that every age has its own spirit to express, its own truth to tell, and that no trammels of set opinion or fixed standards of beauty should ever be allowed to fetter the freedom of an artist to express himself. He was of course (like many great people) ahead of his age and so he suffered more perhaps than most from the restrictions of his day..’

Extract of a letter from Alice Talwin Morris, 20 October 1939

These words, written almost 80 years ago by the widow of designer Talwin Morris to Dr. Tom Honeyman, Director of Glasgow’s civic museums, provide some insight into the personality, character, work ethos and passions of her friend the architect, designer and artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928).

Alice’s letter accompanied an initial gift of seven important early artworks by *The Four* to Glasgow. She made an even larger donation seven years later – including much work by her husband who, from 1893 until his untimely death in 1911, had been the Mackintoshes aesthetically like-minded friend as well as the artistic director for Blackie & Sons publishers. Morris was the link through which Mackintosh was commissioned by Walter Blackie to design his domestic masterpiece, *The Hill House* in Helensburgh. The Morris donation to the City’s civic museums’ collection launched a rediscovery of Mackintosh’s work by those then in charge of the collections and buildings, although it would be some decades before Mackintosh’s work was fully appreciated. Fast forward to the present – 2018 – when the ground-breaking work of Mackintosh is celebrated by the city for the 150th anniversary of his birth.

Glasgow Museums commemorates this significant anniversary with a new temporary exhibition at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. Spanning Mackintosh’s lifetime by following a chronological narrative, the exhibition presents his work in context to Glasgow, key predecessors, influences and *Glasgow Style* contemporaries. The 1890s expressed a new, exciting spirit, which saw an energetic and radical outpouring of new

ideas across all the arts in Europe, particularly in design, architecture, dress and ways of seeing and representing the world. In Glasgow, this decade gave birth to the *Glasgow Style*, a distinctive variant of Art Nouveau centred on the Glasgow School of Art. The exhibition aims to capture the dynamic and entrepreneurial, creative spirit in the City in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries showcasing the rich diversity of designers and artists, educators, institutions, collections, manufacturers and industrialists then working in Glasgow, as well as those working in design and technical education at the Glasgow School of Art.

Works on display represent the very best of Glasgow’s internationally important civic collections, drawn from Glasgow Museums and The Mitchell Special Collections and Archives. Our departments were only recently merged and it has been a pleasure to look into the Mitchell’s holdings and work with colleagues there. There were a few fascinating surprises discovered along the way. A number of works from our collections have never previously been on public display and some are recent acquisitions. The majority have not been shown in Glasgow for 30 or more years, in part due to their light-sensitivity, and include a significant number of works from the Morris gift. As curator of this exhibition, it has been a joy to bring out on display so many works that are rarely seen, and bring some lesser-known names to everyone’s attention.

It has been an exceptionally hard task to pare down the selection to fit the exhibition space, the volumes of which



Part Seen, Imagined Part by Charles Rennie Mackintosh, 1896, in a stained wood and repoussé metal, about 1896–1899, designed and made by Talwin Morris. This was one of the works given by Mrs Alice Talwin Morris in 1939 to Glasgow’s civic collection.

have assisted in shaping the narrative and choices. The aim was to create an immersive environment of beautiful and beautifully made objects, designs and drawings to celebrate this vibrant and creative period in Glasgow’s history. More than 250 objects reveal the full spectrum of media worked including: stained glass, glass, ceramics, mosaic, metalwork, furniture, textiles, stencilling, needlework and embroidery, posters, books, interior and tearoom design, and architectural drawings. Loans from private and public collections, including The Hunterian, Glasgow School of Art and the V&A, London, Strathclyde University Archives and the National Library of Scotland add to the richness and diversity of Glasgow talent displayed.

At the heart of the exhibition is the work of Mackintosh and an exploration of the act of making. Works in a breadth of media have been selected communicating the process of working up ideas and designs and revealing technical processes.

One of the highlights for visitors will be the opportunity for the first time to view up close and at eye level, *The May Queen*, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh’s 4.5 metre long gesso panel from the Ladies’ Luncheon Room in the Ingram Street Tearooms. The panel is one of a pair, with Mackintosh’s *The Wassail*, which the couple made together in 1900 and exhibited in Vienna before they were installed in the tearoom. These first gesso panels are quite crudely made, having the

Detail of *The May Queen* by Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh, 1900. Made for the Ladies' Luncheon Room, Miss Cranston's Ingram Street Tearooms, Glasgow.



appearance of theatrical stage sets, painted string draws the lines of the figures and foliage, pinned to the hessian canvas to hold fast whilst the gesso surface sets hard. The surface is embellished with beads and tin leaf and, when you look closely, it is surprising to see that the oil paint is rather impressionistically applied. If you look really carefully you can see Margaret's finger prints in the surface of some of the pinched plaster relief shapes from the moulding process, sculpted by her fingers and pressed into the gesso surface. It is an absorbing work and I am delighted we have been able to present it in this way.

The exhibition, the accompanying publication and event programme, have been designed to engage and inspire audiences of all ages to go out afterwards and visit Mackintosh's buildings, to take a look at Glasgow with fresh eyes and go, make, create and ...be different.

Alison Brown, Curator, European Decorative Art from 1800, Glasgow Museums and curator of the exhibition Charles Rennie Mackintosh – Making the Glasgow Style

CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH – MAKING THE GLASGOW STYLE

Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow

Friday 30 March–Tuesday 14 August 2018

Opening hours:
Monday–Thursday; Saturday 10am–5pm
Friday & Sunday 11am–5pm

Another important date for your diary – The Oak Room at the V&A Dundee

Unseen for almost 50 years, Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Oak Room is the largest of Miss Cranston's Ingram Street Tearoom interiors removed in 1971. Designed in 1907, completed in 1908, and in use as a tearoom until the early 1950s, Mackintosh's original design is being reassembled, conserved, restored and installed as the centrepiece of the new V&A Dundee's Scottish Design Galleries. The new museum will open to the public on the 15th September 2018.

The conservation of the Oak Room is a collaboration between Glasgow Museums, V&A Dundee, and Dundee City Council. The project is being made possible by a long-term loan from the



collections of Glasgow City Council, grant funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and other fundraising.

<https://www.vandadundee.org>

Scale photographic model showing the over-painted wooden panelling and structure of the Oak Room as removed in 1971. The model was made as part of the research and assessment phase of Glasgow Museums' Ingram Street Tearoom Project in 2004-05.

A proud musical moment in the life of Queen's Cross

A concert by John Maxwell Geddes

The musical world lost a unique and prodigious talent in 2017 with the death of John Maxwell Geddes in September. Dylan Paterson, Business and Events Officer, CRM Society, commemorates the composer in a moving tribute.

The loss of Maxwell Geddes was especially poignant for the team at Queen's Cross, as, earlier in the year, John had offered to compose a piece entitled *A Rose for Margaret* and premiere it at a special fund-raising concert, donating all of the proceeds to the work of the CRM Society.

John had made this generous offer as a result of having been an audience member at another concert at the church. He immediately saw the potential for performing existing as well as this new work in this unique building. John appeared to have an innate appreciation of the church and he seemed to view it with a particular depth of knowledge and understanding – and a very purposeful desire to “lend support to this beautiful building”. He said what he would do ‘to help’ and he made good on those promises of support. ‘Team John’ quickly swung in to action, with friend Quintin Doyle starting arrangements and organising the concert.

John was perhaps uniquely placed to create this new work, as, in the year 2000, he spent several days living in The Hill House, as part of a commission to create new work. The resulting score *The Hill House, a Celebration* was inspired, in John's own words, by “the stimulus of this environment and sleepless nights in Mr Blackie's wonderful library which combined to fire my imagination”.

The commemorative concert, on Sunday 3rd December of last year, brought together some of those musicians whom



John had inspired, taught, enthused and nourished. A concert, which John had planned to conduct himself, was now being performed as a posthumous tribute. In a heart-stopping moment, John's grandson, Ruaridh rose from the pulpit to play the violin solo in the premiere of the new piece. The composer would have taken much pride in this moment of the family's musical continuity, which included Ruaridh playing a violin, which had passed through five generations of the Geddes family.

In addition to the financial support raised on the concert night, a copy of the score for *The Hill House* as well as for *A Rose for Margaret* have been gifted to the library at Queen's Cross and it is hoped that the music will be performed, and enjoyed again in this building, just as John would have wished.

John's generosity and ingenuity has brought so much to Queen's Cross. Beyond this specific and much loved location, however, the composer leaves the country with a musical legacy, not just through his works and life, but with the establishment of the Geddes Peterson Foundation in his memory.

Concert in memory of John Maxwell Geddes at Queen's Cross on 3rd December 2017
© Stuart Robertson

The Foundation will support aspiring classical composers (full information at www.scottishmusiccentre.com/geddes-peterson-foundation/).

The same site also gives details of the memorial concert for John, which will take place on Sunday 29 April 2018 at St John's Renfield, in aid of Cancer Support Scotland.

John Maxwell Geddes, 1941–2017.
Photo: Molly Geddes



A unique volunteering opportunity within the Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society



The working partnership between The Willow Tea Rooms Trust and The Charles Rennie Mackintosh Society has created a venture for both to share Mackintosh knowledge and expertise with visitors and guests.

A new volunteering opportunity has arisen in this all important year for Mackintosh. The redevelopments at 217 Sauchiehall Street, site of Miss Cranston's original Willow Tea Rooms building continue, and as part of a new state of the art interpretation centre and exhibition space, the Society is developing an information point for all things Mackintosh.

Housed in 215 Sauchiehall Street the information point will be a leading resource for visitors and tourists, offering information on the redevelopment of the Tea Rooms whilst also encouraging further participation with all other Mackintosh works and venues.

Volunteers will be engaging directly with the public, answering their questions and queries on Mackintosh as well as developing their own knowledge and experiences with Mackintosh works and the wider Mackintosh group.

The new venture with The Willow Tea Rooms Trust will be volunteer led and is due to launch fully when the Tea Rooms re-open in June. This is an exciting opportunity for the Society as it will afford us a presence and base on one of Glasgow's busiest, central streets, as well

as sharing the excitement of the newly renovated tea rooms.

The Society's own programme of events at Queen's Cross this year will also rely on volunteers; with a busy calendar of concerts, classes, tours and talks scheduled, we are now on the hunt for dedicated volunteers to join our already enthusiastic group.

Event Volunteer roles will cover the period of our exciting Museum of the Moon installation, with its series of one-off themed concerts, as well as the AGM weekend and of course Mackintosh month in October.

Visitor attendance is also set to be high in this all important year and any enthusiastic members looking to share their interest in Mackintosh might also join us as guides at Queen's Cross, assisting in the daily running of the building as well as enlightening visitors to Mackintosh's genius both within the building and beyond.

Training for all roles is available, so even those new to the Society and looking to donate their time may join in the venture.

Any members looking to join the programme at Mackintosh at the Willow or at Queen's Cross may contact the Society via email volunteer@crmsociety.com or by calling either Alice or Jade on 0141 946 6600 to request a volunteer pack.

Join us

Support the work of the Mackintosh Society, the charity that protects, preserves and promotes the heritage of Charles Rennie Mackintosh for the enjoyment of future generations.

Member benefits include the annual Journal, regular newsletters, invitations to exclusive events including study tours, lectures, private views and special visits to less well-known Mackintosh buildings, and free and discounted entry to various Mackintosh venues.

For more information on how to join visit www.crmsociety.com or call 0141 946 6600

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RENNIE
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Luke Jerram's

MUSEUM OF THE MOON

Mackintosh Queen's Cross, Glasgow

11th May - 24th June 2018

ALL TICKET INFO: MUSEUMOFTHEMOON.COM



Measuring seven metres in diameter, the moon features 120dpi detailed NASA imagery of the lunar surface. At an approximate scale of 1:500,000, each centimetre of the internally lit spherical sculpture represents 5km of the moon's surface.

APPEARING UNDER THE MOON: **THE VASELINES, RIVAL CONSOLES, ANDREW MAXWELL, SIMONE FELICE GINGER WILDHEART, START TO END PERFORM DARK SIDE OF THE MOON THE WANDERING HEARTS, THE PASTELS, KRISTIN HERSH**
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