

Strand 3: The challenges facing Art Nouveau heritage (looking towards the future)

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Rooms without a view. The challenges faced so far through the conservation and restoration of the disassembled interiors of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Ingram Street Tea Rooms

In 1971 interiors designed between 1900 and 1911 by Charles Rennie Mackintosh were salvaged from a building on Glasgow's Ingram Street. The interiors occupying a building space of 1466m sq had been operational as tea rooms until 1951. Since the 1980s Glasgow Museums has undertaken extensive material analysis and research assessment of over 3000 individual room elements. Some rooms have been conserved and restored for display. We now have a comprehensive understanding of what these rooms once comprised of, and the issues we have to address should we continue to restore the tea rooms either whole or in part. This paper presents a summary of the findings and processes employed, and identifies the key issues we have to address for the future: authenticity, experience, accessibility, scale and preservation.

Keywords: Glasgow, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Ingram Street Tea Rooms, Conservation, Restoration

Curriculum Vitae

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Curator, European Decorative Art from 1800, Glasgow Museums since 1999
Remit includes furniture and interiors, ceramics, glass, stained glass and design education, with particular focus on the work of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, the Glasgow Style and decorative art and design c.1860-1920.

Worked for Glasgow Museums since 1993; firstly on the major 1996 Glasgow exhibition Charles Rennie Mackintosh and its subsequent three-venue tour of the USA; from 1996-9 as Resource Co-ordinator for the Museums service.

Major Projects: Project manager and curator for building restoration, development and displays at Scotland Street School Museum 1999-2002; curator of the Ingram Street Tea Rooms project 1999 to present; curator of the Charles Rennie Mackintosh and the Glasgow Style gallery at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow (opened 2006).

Further Education: University of Manchester (Postgraduate) 1992-3; University of Edinburgh (History of Art) 1986-1991; Norwich School of Art 1985-1986