

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONTEMPORARY
CURATING
WITHIN A
HERITAGE CONTEXT

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THE MACKINTOSH MUSEUM, built in 1909, is at the heart of Charles Rennie Mackintosh's masterwork, The Glasgow School of Art's Mackintosh Building. With its high level of architectural detail, influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, and Mackintosh's fascination with Japanese architecture and culture, the museum is the antithesis of the white cube model.

This chapter explores how contemporary curating can engage with a specific historical context, in terms of people, place and collection. It also examines how contemporary art practice, through the commissioning process, can become the bridge between the historical and the contemporary. How can an exhibition echo the unique attitude of the building to enable past, present and future to exist simultaneously? In what ways can curators work to contextualize heritage with contemporary practice, to provide innovative access points for diverse audiences including tourists seeking the historical and academic audiences seeking the contemporary?

To establish the background, the chapter begins by broadly describing the conditions of curating exhibition programmes for UK Higher Education Art and Design Institutions. It then defines the context at The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) and goes on to outline my own curatorial methodologies relating to working within this particular environment.

Background

As part of the Council for Higher Education of Art & Design (CHEAD),¹ there is a Galleries Network for art galleries within UK Higher Education Institutions (HEI) focusing on Art & Design. Twenty-seven galleries are listed as members across England and Scotland. The CHEAD Galleries Network

meets through symposia hosted by the members. There is also the University Museums Group, which “supports and advocates for the university museum sector in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.”² Scotland has a University Museums in Scotland Group which “exists to foster the preservation, care and interpretation of historical and cultural collections in Scottish Universities and to promote the interests of the collections.”³ Both the University Museums Group and the Museums in Scotland Group focus primarily on heritage and collection issues, whilst members of CHEAD Galleries Network are mostly aligned with higher Education Art and Design institutions and curate predominantly from a contemporary perspective.

Focusing on contemporary art and design programmes in the UK, there are three main operational models for galleries within higher education institutions. The first is that the remit for the gallery is assigned to an academic researcher, in order to dovetail with the research areas identified by the institution and to contribute towards the institution’s Research Excellence Framework⁴ standing. Often this is not a full-time role, so the researcher can only develop the scope of the programme within part-time hours. The researcher may have the subject of curating as part of their enquiry, but equally they may come from another perspective.

The second model is that an exhibitions officer works with a committee of selected academics across the disciplines of the institution, to reflect a cross-disciplinary approach. The committee may be set up to approve exhibition proposals from members of the institution, from the institution’s networks and beyond. Often the committee will consider proposals from the exhibitions department using the same approval mechanism.

The third model is that an exhibitions department has its own staff structure with curator, assistant curator and technician, and is reportable to a senior department that it is managed by (often research or marketing) whilst also reporting to the management committee of the institution. The classification that the post of the curator falls under can be academic, or, as is most often the case, termed as administrative or support staff. The Glasgow School of Art team consists of exhibitions director, exhibitions co-coordinator and a part-time technician, who is scheduled only for installation and take-down of projects. In addition to reporting to management, at The Glasgow School of Art there is also an Advisory Board consisting of a mix of external and internal members, who support and add value to the proposed curatorial programme.

Other variance to be noted is that the number and type of galleries and display spaces are different at each HEI, ranging from purpose-built gallery and project spaces to display areas such as sculpture courts, concourses and corridors. For example, as curator of exhibitions at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee (2002-2009), I programmed two galleries, one concourse area and one corridor. At The Glasgow School of Art, the Mackintosh Museum has been the primary gallery under the exhibitions director's curatorial remit, latterly joined by the Reid Gallery (launched in April 2014), whilst other gallery spaces on campus are booked out for departmental student end-of-year and work-in-progress shows.

The majority of HEI galleries have the operational side of their staff costs covered by the organization. However, in terms of core programme funding, at a CHEAD Galleries Network

symposium in University of Bournemouth, in 2012, members reported an annual programme budget ranging from zero to £50,000. The average core programme budget for galleries was £10,000, with a minority placed at the mid-to-top range of the bracket. This means that part of the role of the curator is to fundraise, or work with projects which bring their own funding with them. It also means that projects can lead on the kind of funding that is applied for, equally a project may often require to be shaped around the criteria of the fund. Fundraising is also important to ensure that the institution follows best practice in the payment of artist fees, production and exhibition costs.

The content of gallery programming is also variable, from those providing a space for mostly touring exhibitions, to those who actively commission and produce projects for their spaces. Given the educational remit of HEI galleries – that programming should tie into academic research outputs, should generate teaching and learning opportunities, and create professional development for the student body in addition to creating meaningful opportunities for invited practitioners – these are all aspects for the curator to consider whilst responding to context, ensuring the programme meets with organizational aims and ambitions plus tailoring projects to funding opportunities. There are several challenges that come with the territory. The first is to evolve a programme with a clear identity, rather than a fragmented series of diverse projects. Furthermore, with so many nuances of exhibitions activity within an art school environment, the key is to find ways to clearly articulate exhibition activities, including those beyond the site of the exhibition space, which can often fall below the

radar of management and audiences, including the student and academic body plus external audience.

For example, for staff and students who are focused primarily on their own individual practice development or research area, often the exhibition programme will not be visible unless they are directly involved in it. For the visiting audience, some activities will take place beyond their eyes. Pragmatically, a number of the gallery areas may be internally facing due to security issues or building layouts; whilst educational remit (such as professional development support for students) will again by nature occur outwith the public domain. Often what is seen in the gallery is the tip of the iceberg of what takes place.

Other defining characteristics are dependent on the organization's guiding principles for the exhibition programme: for example, if cross disciplinary, the exhibition programme should maintain an equal number of design, art and architecture outputs across the year. This can bring its own issues to navigate, namely that curating can often be led by single areas of expertise, (the curator may have a visual arts background or a design background) so how can it be guaranteed that the programme be cohesive whilst working across a range of disciplines? One of the best things about working within a large educational community means that there is never a stagnant situation or lack of ideas since there is such diversity of processes and working methods – it is an organism fuelled by creativity and diversity – which in turn influences an exhibitions programme to develop innovative approaches. However, it is certain that every curator or exhibitions officer of an HEI gallery has felt the squeeze of a staff member wanting their work

shown or, indeed, requesting that a peer or friend of theirs be invited to exhibit. In an often subjective environment, it can be a difficult and thorny path to say no, even when it can be substantiated by an exhibitions policy stating selection criteria and aims. The territories of HEI galleries are variable in number, type, focus and running.

The Glasgow School of Art background

GSA is internationally recognized as one of Europe's foremost university-level institutions for creative education and research in fine art, design and architecture. It is a Small Specialist Institution which means it is independent, rather than part of a university.⁵ Founded in 1845 as a Government School of Design, it now offers undergraduate and postgraduate degree courses to over 1,900 students.

The Glasgow School of Art has employed an exhibitions officer for its gallery, since 1990, when Glasgow was European City of Culture. The exhibitions officer worked with an academic committee to decide on the exhibition programme. This role was replaced by an exhibitions director post in 2009, and the committee by an advisory board. The role of the exhibitions director is to curate a contemporary exhibition programme across the disciplines of art, design and architecture. Furthermore, it is a requirement of Heritage Lottery Funding that every 18 months an exhibition connects with aspects of GSA's Archive & Collections Centre. This resource comprises a wide range of material: from GSA's institutional archives to artworks and architectural drawings, textile pieces, plaster casts, photographs and furniture. Part of the archive also relates to holdings on Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his peers.

The GSA exhibition programme works with practitioners at all stages of their careers, from students and staff, right through to invited local, national and international artists ranging from the emergent to the established. The curated programme has to be relevant to the aims of the organization, with its specific context defined as research, teaching and learning, place and communities. The exhibition programme also has to operate beyond the institution to establish a clear identity, build a reputation for innovative work, develop audiences and obtain funding from external sources to add to variable core programme funding. As a gallery within a working art school which also is outward-facing and open to the public, the exhibition programme at GSA has to operate for two communities; an academic community of staff and students, and a visiting audience made up of arts professionals, contemporary gallery visitors and those exploring the heritage of the building and the art school's history.

Methodology

Working as a curator in a gallery environment in a Scottish higher education institution over the last twelve years, my main aim has been to develop a responsive and active gallery model, which fluently delivers a cohesive exhibition and event programme and which creates structures based on understanding diverse approaches in contemporary practice and research. Each project, where possible, acts as a catalyst to build in opportunities within and around it, tying in professional development as well as teaching and learning opportunities. Each opportunity the exhibition programme can create should make space for the next step in that person's practice,

whether they be a student or established practitioner.

For each project there is a shifting set of internal and external factors that must be identified then creatively navigated, to create a framework for that particular project. These can include funding, organizational aim or focus, interest in a particular artist or designer, focus on particular part of the audience, an aspect of place or resource, a collaboration with another organization or professional, a theme or question that has come up through research, or a question generated from a previous project. These factors establish the starting point for the project, then, through engagement and dialogue with the practitioners, the project takes on its own momentum. The role of the curator shifts within each project, as it is dependent on how the practitioner works, the ways in which they wish to work with the curator and the amount of support, discussion or facilitation needed. The curator's role often involves making initial connections for the practitioner in terms of what may interest them in the specific context, then, finding ways to interpret the practice and project for the audience.

My previous work at Grizedale Arts in the Lake District,⁶ where there was no gallery, and where the programme focused on outdoor and indoor sites, has impacted my approach: the gallery is only one site within the programme, and the overall programme should reflect the spectrum of places where practice can occur, and encompass a diversity of ways in which it can take place. So off-site projects, residencies, open studios and collaboration with other organizations are equally important to the gallery space itself, and this reflects the range of opportunities available for (especially student) practitioners, beyond the educational walls.

Contemporary curating within a heritage context

When I began to curate the Mackintosh Museum at The Glasgow School of Art, I felt the weight of several histories. These could be defined as the architect himself through the venue's architecture; and the presence of past generations of staff, students and visitors who have moved through the building. In the allegory of Plato's Cave, the cave's chained residents can see on the cave wall only the moving shadows of the objects that pass behind them. Here in Glasgow, the phantasms of The Immortals,⁷ the Spook School,⁸ The New Glasgow Boys,⁹ a series of Turner Prize winners,¹⁰ high-achieving alumni, and the institution's being identified as the hothouse for a particular kind of artist activity leading to Grit and the Glamour,¹¹ all flicker tantalizingly on the wall, or can perpetually be captured as media sound bites. Mackintosh himself is omnipresent in the city and beyond as an easily recognizable style in merchandising and souvenirs.

The Mackintosh building has never been emptied of its educational activities to become a museum. In this living, working building with its community of students and staff, past, present and future exist together in a continuum. Even the lights that Mackintosh made for the centre of the library are futuristic, designed to represent a city made of tower blocks well before this kind of architecture was invented. And whilst the school is undoubtedly proud of its history, the Reid Building, designed by Steven Holl Architects opened directly opposite the Mackintosh Building in April 2014. This architectural juxtaposition neatly references the different time frames that exist simultaneously.

Facing out towards the city, rather than in on itself, the

art school is made up of different types of buildings across Garnethill and the city, housing undergraduate and graduate courses in fine art, design and architecture. In the early days, students were trained to decorate the city through civic sculpture, buildings, and design. Present-day students might work with communities or make work in the gaps, wastelands and overlooked spaces of the city, or create design ideas from the surrounding urban fabric.

The exhibition programme at The Glasgow School of Art has both an internal and external audience. On one hand, as the gallery is in an educational institution, the programme must be a transparent educational model to reflect upon and show contemporary practice in all its forms and processes. On the other hand, with over 23,000 visitors to the building in 2011-12, many reflecting their interest in Charles Rennie Mackintosh, heritage and the building, thought needs to be given to how they will respond to a contemporary programme within the Mackintosh Museum.

The challenge for the exhibition programme is to find relevant ways to engage with all the audiences we cater for. It is equally important that practitioners can respond creatively to the building. A past tutor, David Harding, who set up the institution's environmental art course, which produced artists such as Douglas Gordon, David Shrigley and Christine Borland, often quoted John Latham's statement to his students: "The context is half the work". This could be considered a guide for curating a contemporary programme for the Mackintosh Museum. When I took up the role of exhibitions director, I noted down my first responses to the Mackintosh Museum, as well as the responses of others. The GSA director, Seona

Reid (who retired in 2014 after 14 years in post), in her opening speech for the historical centenary exhibition, *The Flower and The Green Leaf* (2009)¹² concluded, “...the contemporary often sits uncomfortably in the Mackintosh Museum”. A visiting curator also said at a meeting: “This space has too much character.” However, for me it is the tension to which these responses refer that have made the Mackintosh Museum an intriguing space to work with.

Bridging projects

The interaction between past and present was inherent in my first curatorial question for the programme: how can the contemporary sit with the historical? The Mackintosh Museum is a space that can contain duality and tension. The programme had to accommodate the dialectical premise that solutions can come out of potentially opposing forces. This question also created access points for audiences: students could gain an understanding of the relevance of the historical to their contemporary practice, while visitors seeking out the historical could gain a greater understanding of its links with contemporary practice. The projects I go on to describe come under the definition of bridging projects, bringing together the historical and contemporary in diverse and innovative ways.

A sequence of earlier exhibitions looked at how contemporary artists reference the historical and the ways contemporary practice can link to archival sources. *Restore Us and Regain* (2010),¹³ with Tommy Grace, Ged Quinn and Tony Swain, brought together three artists whose work contained references to past histories, archaic landscapes, monuments and ruins. By referencing historical detail, or times lost, the works



FIG. 1: *Restore Us and Regain*, (2010), Tommy Grace, Ged Quinn, Tony Swain. Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Alan Dimmick.

employed contemporary methods to critique and subvert the past (Figure 1).

Living Today: with information from the George Orwell Archive (2011) was a group show¹⁴ which presented work exploring aspects of society – politics, culture, economy, living conditions and social structures. The exhibition compared the challenging times of two periods – the 1930s and present day. Digital prints taken from George Orwell’s original manuscript¹⁵ of *The Road to Wigan Pier*¹⁶ were exhibited on tables positioned around the heart of the central stairwell. Responses of contemporary artists to social issues were placed around them. Two commissions were part of the exhibition. The Glasgow School of Art published Eva Merz’s *You, Me, Us and Them* (2011), in an edition of 500, a publication looking at women in prison and the criminal justice system in Scotland through interviews ranging from a past offender to a retired judge. GSA staff member and artist Ross Birrell returned to Wigan to find that the only remnant of Orwell in the city was the Orwell pub which was about to shut down. In the video work *The Road to Wigan Pier* (2010), Birrell is filmed silently reading George Orwell’s book, in front of the pub, in order for the artist to set the continuing importance of Orwell’s writing against attempts to gentrify the site.

Responses to bridging the historical and contemporary

The next three examples of exhibitions in the Mackintosh Museum include a project which engaged with students; a group exhibition by invited national and international artists; and a supported research project led by a GSA researcher. These show how the programme has worked with internal

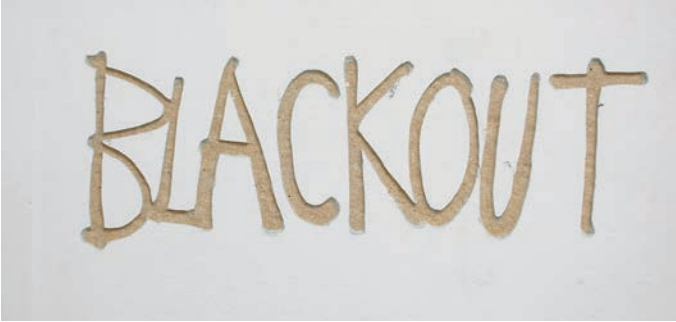


FIG. 2: Nils Guadagnin, *Engram*, from the exhibition, *The Invigilators*. Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Janet Wilson.

stakeholders (the student and staff body) as well as invited artists.

In 2011, a project was initiated with our student team of exhibition invigilators who look after the gallery space and answer any questions from the public about the exhibition. The Invigilators inverted the normally passive role of exhibition invigilators¹⁷ by inviting twenty of them to make work for the space. They had all had plenty of time to consider the space from the point of view of the invigilator's chair. Some made work about silence. Some reflected upon the space and the art objects it contains; others responded to the unique architecture and atmosphere of the Mackintosh Museum and the inspirations of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Others examined the role of the invigilator as a form of art labour. Nils Guadagnin in his work *Engram*¹⁸ made an intervention which questioned the evolution of the space into a white cube. The word *Blackout* was carved into the museum wall, down to the level of chipboard, revealing the numerous layers of paint which had covered the walls, and the transformations this space has undergone over the years (Figure 2).

The group show, *Live Your Questions Now*, (2011)¹⁹ looked at the notion of time and generations by taking place concurrently with Glasgow's hosting of the 7th British Art Show, *In the days of the Comet*. The survey show is recognized as a way to frame the works of a wide range of artists in terms of age or geography. Increasingly, many survey shows²⁰ predominantly focus on emergent artists in their 20s and 30s. *Live your Questions Now* was a survey exhibition of Scottish, UK and international artists over 60 years old, and gave the opportunity to look at the longevity of careers, and the continuing



FIG. 3: *Studio 58: Women Artists in Glasgow Since World War II*, (2012). Curated by Dr Sarah Lowndes. Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Janet Wilson.

questions that propel practice forward. The exhibition title came from a letter Rainer Maria Rilke wrote to a young poet who had asked him for criticism on his poems and advice:

Live your questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually, without even noticing it, live your way into the answer.

– *Letters to a Young Poet*, 1934

With part of my remit being to support staff researchers, in 2012 I invited GSA staff member, curator and writer Dr Sarah Lowndes to curate a bridging project for the museum. She dealt directly with the phantasms of past generations and GSA's histories in *Studio 58: Women Artists in Glasgow since World War II*. The title came from the studio on the top floor of the Mackintosh Building which historically was the dedicated workspace for women students. Studio 58 contextualized the work of contemporary women artists in Glasgow by documenting and displaying the little-known and under-represented lineage of women's art in the city from 1939 onwards, within the frame of the city's art school where all the artists included in the exhibition either studied or taught.²¹ Studio 58 was organized around four thematic strands: landscape/still life, body/self, printed matter and photography/film. The artists included Margaret Morris, Mary Armour, Ivy Proudfoot, and Kathleen Mann, as well as those who followed them, including Joan Eardley, Margot Sandeman, Bet Low and Sam Ainsley and younger artists such as Cathy Wilkes, Claire Barclay, Victoria Morton, Hayley Tompkins and Karla Black. Rather than being presented chronologically, the works stepped out of this



FIG. 4: Inhale, Exhale, Alice Channer (2010). Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Alan Dimmick.

formal constraint, and allowed for conversations and connections between content and approach (Figure 3).

Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art Projects 2010-14

For the final case study, I will look at three GSA projects I curated for Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art. Looking at the commissions as a series, I worked with a national artist, Alice Channer, followed by an international artist, Folkert de Jong, concluding with an international artist living locally, Michael Stumpf. Glasgow International is a biennial festival that takes place across galleries and museums in Glasgow and brings together local and international artists. Its name is taken from the Glasgow International Exhibition held in 1888, which was Scotland's response to the World Fairs of culture and history that were popular in the 19th century.

In 2010 I commissioned London-based artist, Alice Channer, to make new work for the Mackintosh Museum with the solo exhibition *Inhale, Exhale*.²² Channer's work often takes the form of material, particularly fabric, which she pleats, stretches and folds. Through exhibitions, she explores the potential for galleries to have the feeling of being inhabited, paralleling the way clothes are worn on the body (Figure 4). The works Channer made, in a sense, clothed Mackintosh's work. Italian marble cuffs were placed around the banisters of the museum like bangles. Aluminium casts from severed waistbands of leggings formed shapes like smoke rings that were suspended on coloured elastic from the beams. Paper treated with water, puckered to resemble the texture and directional stripe of seersucker material, was hung over the beams at both sides, resembling a garment hung over a shoulder. Channer



FIG. 5: *The Immortals*. Left to right: Katherine Cameron, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Janet Aitken, John Keppie, Agnes Raeburn, Jessie Keppie, Frances Macdonald, Herbert McNair, Margaret Macdonald. The Glasgow School of Art Archives and Collections.

used these references to the immediacy and intimacy of the worn garment in an attempt to make her own and Mackintosh's works exist in the present. She said:

[My] response to the historical, ideological and political associations of Mackintosh's building is to simply position my own time and place alongside them. I can do this because for me the gallery is another body, person, entity or being, alongside myself rather than above or below me. In this way I have approached *Inhale, Exhale* as a two person show... The body becomes the beams, banisters, floor, ceiling, walls and volume of Mackintosh's Museum.

Channer was insistent that the exhibition did not claim to be site-specific, saying it was "responsive" but not a response. The work was able to achieve this as it moved away from the context as well as with it, sometimes in harmony, at other times against.

Dealing with the personality of Mackintosh, in 2012, Dutch artist Folkert de Jong²³ made a new installation of figurative sculptures for the Museum, inspired by the figures of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his wife Margaret MacDonald Mackintosh. The exhibition title and this new body of work, collectively entitled *The Immortals*,²⁴ referred to the name they gave to their peer group that included Herbert McNair and Margaret's sister Frances. The work was also inspired by a small photograph album called *The Immortals*, held by The Glasgow School of Art Archives and Collections, of Mackintosh and his peers out for the day to a Scottish farm (Figure 5).



FIG. 6: *The Immortals* (detail) (2012), Folkert de Jong. Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Janet Wilson.

Folkert de Jong is an artist who freely mixes up times, materials and cultural references in his work (Figure 6). By considering the sculptural figures he made as actors on the two stages of the Museum, de Jong explored the theatricality of the space. His work also made connections with the museum's past function as the drawing studio in the art school, which originally housed all the figurative classical plaster casts for students to learn from. De Jong's figures, made from synthetic materials such as industrial styrofoam and polyurethane insulation foam, were placed alongside traditional plaster casts including *The Rebel Slave* and *Dying Slave*. To pick up on the theme of the previous use of the museum, two Drawing Studio events were run, for students and for the public: a structured session drawing the traditional plastercasts, followed by drawing de Jong's contemporary sculptures. Participants felt that their response to both the contemporary and the historic sculptures changed during the workshop, as they observed and spent time in the exhibition (Figure 7).

In 2014, for the third Glasgow International project, Michael Stumpf, a GSA alumnus was invited to make new work for the Balconies Commission. Stumpf's response, *This Song Belongs to Those who Sing It* captures and plays with a key moment for the art school, framing two buildings, early in their relationship, in a new conversation with each other – namely the Mackintosh building and Steven Holl's new Reid Building. The Balconies Commission was the first exterior creative response and interaction with the two buildings (Figure 8).

Conclusion

The bridging projects I have described, which link the



FIG. 7: The Drawing Studio workshop during Folkert de Jong's *The Immortals*, (2012). Mackintosh Museum, The Glasgow School of Art. Photograph: Saule Zuk.

contemporary with the historical, have become a way to create opportunities for both practitioners and audiences. Rather than restricting the curatorial discourse to a particular heritage theme, time period, or personality such as Mackintosh, the multi-layered specificity of this building encourages a layering of past, present and future, leading to an exhibition programme which engages with a cyclical rather than linear understanding of time.

On 23 May 2014, a major fire occurred in the Mackintosh building. With damage to the west wing, including the loss of the Mackintosh Library, the building will be closed for some time, to allow for restoration. The Glasgow School of Art exhibition programme continues in the Reid Gallery of Steven Holl's new Reid Building, opened April 2014. The Reid Building is sited directly across the road from the Mackintosh Building, with views onto it. The exciting challenge over the next period will be to work curatorially with diverse practitioners to unfold the potential readings of this new white cube gallery space, which in terms of its architectural detail is the opposite of the Mackintosh Museum.

This programme has already begun, with commissioned works for the inaugural exhibition, *Caesura*, (2014)²⁵ including the film *Seongbuk District Seongbuk Resident* (2014, HD, 23 mins) by Seoul-based GSA graduate Heaven Baek. Baek was invited to use a building designed by Steven Holl Architects in Seoul as a creative location for her film. She worked with Korean soap opera stars, who play the fictional residents of Seongbuk District, in which Holl Architects' building is located. Their script is dictated by real residents of a poorer part of the area who were asked: what do you think your richer neighbours do



FIG. 8: *Now Sing*, (2014), Michael Stumpf. Balconies Commission, Reid Building, The Glasgow School of Art, on the occasion of Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art. Photograph: mcateer photograph.

all day? When shown in the new Reid Gallery at GSA, the film provided an expanded reading of the architect firm's practice, showing details of Daeyang Gallery and House, a private residence which Holl Architects built in 2012.

The contemporary nature of the Reid Gallery will also provide a different reading for GSA exhibitions' continuing series of projects which continue to respond to their heritage context. This chapter has described a series of projects which use contemporary exhibitions within a heritage context. The Reid Gallery potentially reverses such an approach, as it provides a clear white space as opposed to the detailed arts and crafts environment of the Mackintosh Museum. *Cabbages in an Orchard: The forms and formers of Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Graham Fagen* (2014) is the first of a series of exhibitions in the new gallery. It marks the conclusion of an invitation to contemporary practitioner Graham Fagen to research Charles Rennie Mackintosh through GSA Archives & Collection Centre, in order to find the common ground between both their practices. Originally destined for the Mackintosh Museum, due to the fire this exhibition was transferred to the new building. Fagen selected three early Mackintosh works, from the DIY publication *The Magazine* (1896) which brought together the drawings, writing and ideas of Mackintosh and his peers when they were still students. Fagen then created a new body of work, which moved on from these originals. In the pristine environment of the white cube, the presentation of Mackintosh's watercolours, alongside Fagen's work, allowed the viewer to see Mackintosh in a sense out of context, and therefore afresh. The hand-drawn pencil lines, and the splash of the watercolours, compressed time and reflected

the immediacy of Mackintosh's approach. The opportunities which the Reid Gallery provides for approaching heritage in reverse, unexpectedly allows for new curatorial methodologies and responses from the programme, its contemporary practitioners and its visitors.

NOTES

1. Council for Higher Education in Art and Design (CHEAD) <http://www.thead.ac.uk/> overview. The Galleries Network was formed in 2009.
2. University Museums Group <http://universitymuseumsgroup.wordpress.com/about/>.
3. University Museums in Scotland <http://www.umis.ac.uk/about/>.
4. Research Academic Framework <http://www.ref.ac.uk/> is the system for assessing the quality of research in UK Higher Education Institutions, with research excellence informing research funding.
5. The Glasgow School of Art has undergraduate and postgraduate degrees validated by the University of Glasgow. In Scotland, the remaining three higher education art schools have merged over the last eighteen year period with universities. Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design, founded in 1892, became part of University of Dundee in 1996; Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, founded in 1885 is now part of Robert Gordon University; and Edinburgh College of Art was the most recent to merge, in 2011, with University of Edinburgh.
6. Grizedale Arts is an artists' residency and curatorial project which engages with a rural context whilst developing multi-site projects that occur locally, nationally and internationally. I worked as Projects Officer from 2000 to 2002 following a writer's residency there in 1999. www.grizedale.org.
7. *The Immortals* is the name for Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his wider peer group, as coined by them.
8. *The Spook School* was an initially derogatory name for the Glasgow Four – Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Herbert MacNair, Margaret and Frances MacDonald – as some critics derided their style for incorporating “ghostly” figures in their designs.
9. The name for a group of figurative painters in Glasgow in the 1980s, including Stephen Campbell, Ken Currie and Peter Howson, who had all been students at The Glasgow School of Art.
10. Turner Prize winners who have studied at GSA include Douglas Gordon (1996),

- Simon Starling (2005) and Martin Boyce (2011).
11. BBC Scotland programme from the *Imagine* series, 2012. Directed by Colin Murray, the programme: "...explores the story of a group of artists and curators who stormed the international art world and turned their home city of Glasgow into a global capital for contemporary art."
 12. *The Flower and the Green Leaf* exhibition explored the lives and work of GSA's staff and students during the early twentieth century.
 13. The exhibition title *Restore Us and Regain* is from Book One of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.
 14. Matei Bejenaru (RO), Ross Birrell (UK), Francis Cape (USA), Jens Haaning (DK), David Harding (UK), Ângela Ferreira (PT), Eva Merz (DK).
 15. Information came from the George Orwell Archive, University College London.
 16. *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937) was commissioned by Victor Gollancz and published by the Left Book Club, and documented Orwell's observations of poverty in the north east of England before the Second World War.
 17. At The Glasgow School of Art Exhibitions Department, the workforce of invigilators is made up from fifteen students. They come from all disciplines, and all year groups, undergraduate and postgraduate. From working with the department in this capacity, they gain professional development and also the chance to spend time in the space thinking about the work on show, perhaps thinking how it links to what they are making.
 18. In neuropsychology, an *engram* is a hypothetical means by which memory traces are stored as physical changes in the brain.
 19. Sam Ainsley (UK), Helena Almeida (PT), Alasdair Gray (UK), Joan Jonas (USA), Běla Kolářová (Czech Republic), Michael Kidner (UK), Lygia Pape (Brazil).
 20. Examples include: *Young London*, V22, London (2011), an exhibition of 35 young London artists; *Nought to Sixty* (2008), the Institute of Contemporary Arts' survey show celebrating its 60th anniversary, presenting the work of emerging artists from Great Britain and Ireland; and *The Generational: Younger than Jesus* (2009), the New Museum in New York, exhibiting work of 145 artists under 33 years old.

21. *Studio 58 Women Artists in Glasgow since World War II*, edited by Dr Sarah Lowndes, published by The Glasgow School of Art (2012), includes accounts of several generations of women artists who have either studied or taught at The Glasgow School of Art.
22. *Inhale, Exhale* was part of Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art 2010. A publication is available, with text by Michelle Cotton.
23. Folkert de Jong (b. 1972) studied at the Rijksakademie of Fine Art in Amsterdam. In 2012 he designed costumes and props for the theatre play *Troilus and Cressida* by the Wooster group and The Royal Shakespeare Company. De Jong has exhibited widely internationally, including solo exhibitions at James Cohan Gallery, New York; Luis Adelantado Gallery, Mexico City; Kunsthalle Winterthur, Switzerland; Chisenhale Gallery, London, UK. Group exhibitions include *Shape of Things to Come: New Sculpture*, The Saatchi Gallery, London, UK (2011); *Monumental: Contemporary Figurative Sculpture*, Herbert Johnson Museum of Art New York (2010) and the Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia (2010). www.studiofolkertdejong.com.
24. *The Immortals* was commissioned by The Glasgow School of Art in association with Glasgow International Festival of Visual Art 2012 with support from the Mondriaan Fund.
25. *Caesura*, Reid Gallery, The Glasgow School of Art (2014) included commissions by GSA graduates Heaven Baek, Raydale Dower and Briggs & Cole, in response to the architecture of the new building, and the particular time it marked in the art school's 170 year history. A *caesura* denotes a brief, silent pause in poetry or music, during which metrical time is not counted. This inaugural exhibition was intended to act as a *caesura*; a pause in time and the beginning of a new chapter for the art school.
26. *The Magazine*, a student publication by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and his peers can be viewed at <http://www.gsathemagazine.net/>. Four volumes, a magazine for each season, were produced between 1893 and 1896.