

HOUSE FOR AN ART LOVER

Bellahouston Park



SUMMARY:

The House for an Art Lover is a building constructed in 1989-96, based on a design of 1901 by Charles Rennie Mackintosh with his wife, Margaret MacDonald. In 1901 Mackintosh entered a competition to design a "Haus Eines Kunstfreundes" or "Art Lovers House" set by German design magazine "Zeitschrift Fur Innendekoration". In the end, although Mackintosh was commended for his competition design, his entry was disqualified because he was late in submitting interior views of the house.

In 1989, Graham Roxburgh, Glasgow civil engineer, had the idea to finally build the House for an Art Lover. The drawings which Mackintosh produced were very detailed for a competition entry but were not intended as technical plans from which an actual house would be built and the task of interpreting and turning them into reality was a difficult challenge for Roxburgh's team of architects. Lots of detective work was needed to fill the gaps where Mackintosh's drawings which showed only the sketchiest details.

The house opened to the public in 1996 and is now a venue for art exhibitions and other events, as well as being a visitor attraction.

THINK ABOUT:

- The Mackintoshes were designing a residential house whereas the current house was constructed to be a commercial building. How has that affected the design?
- It is not unusual for architects to make changes to their work until the last minute. What changes do you think Mackintosh might have made if he had built the house himself?
- Find out about other unbuilt Mackintosh designs.
- Glasgow School of Art, which was also designed by Mackintosh, was involved in the building of the house. Compare the two buildings.
- Margaret MacDonald, an artist and Mackintosh's wife, designed the interiors of the house. Find out about her life and work.

FIND OUT MORE:

Mackintosh Architecture website, catalogue entry for House for an Art Lover competition designs, <http://www.mackintosh-architecture.gla.ac.uk/catalogue/pdf/M191.pdf>

House for an Art Lover website, <http://www.houseforanartlover.co.uk/>

Canmore database, House for an Art Lover, <https://canmore.org.uk/site/289669/glasgow-bellahouston-park-house-for-an-art-lover>

BBC website, *Margaret MacDonald: the talented other half of Charles Rennie Mackintosh*, http://www.bbc.co.uk/scotland/arts/margaret_macdonald_the_talented_other_half_of_charles_rennie_mackintosh.shtml