From the Chair

After an action-packed summer, I am delighted to report on the SSAH’s wide-ranging activities over the last few months and our plans for the rest of 2016 and beyond.

Building on the success of our one-day conference in January on *Women in Scottish Art 1885-1965*, which was hosted in collaboration with the National Galleries of Scotland, plans are well underway for the publication of the SSAH’s journal later this year. Many thanks to all of the contributors and editorial team.

The SSAH also promotes scholarship in the history of art and art located in Scotland by offering a small number of grants to support research. A recent recipient of our research grant has prepared a report that features in this newsletter.

Since the last edition of the newsletter, we have also hosted a number of spring and summer events in a variety of locations. At the end of May, we hosted a weekend visit to the picturesque artists’ town of Kirkcudbright in Dumfries and Galloway. In July, the Director of the Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Elspeth King, provided a fascinating tour of the Smith’s art collections. This was followed in August by a visit to Charles Rennie Mackintosh’s masterpiece - the Hill House - in Helensburgh. The visit was accompanied by a tour of an exhibition on the artist, teacher and craftsman, Henry Taylor Wyse, led by the curators, Elizabeth Cumming and Heather Jack.

Future events for 2016 include a tour of Kellie Castle in October. We are also working on some very exciting plans for our 2017 events programme – all will be revealed in due course!

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank you for your continuing support and enthusiasm for the SSAH. If you would like to share any ideas or news with the society, please do contact me on cr67@st-andrews.ac.uk.

Claire Robinson

SSAH Research Support Grants

The Scottish Society for Art History promotes scholarship in the history of Scottish art and art located in Scotland. To facilitate this, the SSAH offers research support grants from £50 to £500 to assist with research costs and travel expenses. Applicants must be working at a post-graduate level or above and should either be resident in Scotland or doing research that necessitates travel to Scotland. Application deadline: 30 November.

To apply for a research grant please send via e-mail:

- a cover letter
- current curriculum vitae
The anonymous 18th century portrait of Dido Elizabeth Belle and Lady Elizabeth Murray at Scone Palace has gained its current renown thanks to Amma Asante’s thought-provoking film, *Belle* (2013), which traces Dido’s life, a gentlewoman of mixed racial heritage whose mother was enslaved. Her great-uncle, William Murray, the Earl of Mansfield and Lord Chief Justice of Great Britain, and his wife raised the two cousins as companions. In the portrait, they are shown together, but portrayed via contrasts. The painting’s composition is a significant variation of attendant portraits, a common formula that depicted two people of different ranks and often of different racial or ethnic identity together. What makes this portrait distinct is that it presents the young women together as subjects, though still employing imagery that denied subjectivity to black figures in art. Interestingly, Asante changed the portrait in the film, removing Dido’s unusual gesture and her turban – signaling its complexity.

During Summer 2015, I traveled to Perth to see the painting and to work in the archives held there. I consulted inventories of Kenwood House, tracing the ownership of the portrait through the 20th century. What is notable was not that the painting was retained, but how the portrait’s identification changed. In 1796, it was described as *Lady Finch-Hatton and Mrs Davinier*, using their married names. By 1904, only Lady Finch-Hatton was recognized and Dido had become a ‘negress attendant.’ The racialized gendering of Dido’s identity assimilated the image to the attendant portrait tradition erasing her subjectivity and demonstrating that no one reading of the portrait – from the celebratory to the critical – can encapsulate it. Rather, it becomes clear that the historical context and memory shaped the image’s meaning.

My interest in the portrait began with my teaching and it has become my current research focus. I presented a preliminary paper, *Locating Dido and Elizabeth*, at the Aphra Behn Society Meeting in November 2015 based on my research. I am now preparing a journal article on this material. I am grateful to the Society for supporting my research into this fascinating and significant portrait.

**Reviews**

**Review - Visit to Kirkcudbright, 28-29 May 2016**

By Claire Robinson, Museum Collections Unit, University of St Andrews

In May, SSAH members enjoyed a weekend-long visit to the artists’ town of Kirkcudbright in Dumfries and Galloway. The event was scheduled to coincide with the annual art and craft open studios event, known as the ‘Spring Fling’, which showcased the town as a lively hub of the creative arts.
We launched our programme of events with a visit to The Stewartry Museum, where we met David Devereaux and David Steel, who both acted as very knowledgeable guides for the weekend! After exploring the local and natural history displays in the museum, we embarked on a walking tour of the town. With David Devereaux at the helm, we saw the houses and studios of some of the artists who have lived and worked in Kirkcudbright, including E.A. Hornel, E.A. Taylor, Jessie M. King and William Mouncey.

Later that afternoon, we visited The Tolbooth Art Centre and enjoyed a presentation from Anne Ramsbottom, Museums Curator (West) at Dumfries and Galloway Museums Service, on the Kirkcudbright Art Gallery Project. We heard about plans to create a major art gallery in Kirkcudbright Town Hall, which has secured funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This exciting new development will enable Dumfries and Galloway Council to display and celebrate their Kirkcudbright Artists’ Collection, which was recognised as a collection of national significance in 2015. Due to open in 2017, the new Kirkcudbright Art Gallery will become a vibrant cultural centre with a permanent gallery, temporary exhibition space, art store, working areas and a café. There are also plans to display a reconstruction of Charles Oppenheimer’s studio and a Viking hoard, which was recently discovered at Twynholm near Kirkcudbright. The group reconvened for dinner in the evening at The Selkirk Arms, renowned for being the likely spot where Robert Burns wrote his famous *The Selkirk Grace* in 1794.

On Sunday, we had the privilege of a private viewing of Broughton House; the former home of the Glasgow Boy, E.A. Hornel. This 18th century town house has been faithfully preserved by the National Trust for Scotland as a living museum of Hornel’s life and work. A real highlight was Hornel’s Gallery, lavishly decorated with a Parthenon frieze and panelled walls, which he used as a private gallery to showcase his works. The artist’s studio, complete with an unfinished painting on an easel, provided a fascinating insight into the artist’s method. Hornel’s beautiful garden, inspired by his love of Japan, was a real delight to explore in glorious sunshine.

Lastly, we had the pleasure of meeting Ian Cameron-Smith who told us about WASPS (Workshop and Artists’ Studio Provision Scotland), which was followed by the opportunity to visit artists in Kirkcudbright Artists’ Studios and see some of the incredible works that they have produced.

Many thanks to all of the individuals who made this trip possible, particularly David Devereaux, Sandy Brewer, Anne Ramsbottom and also to all the members who came along! It was a pleasure to meet everyone and we look forward to hosting more SSAH excursions in the future!

**Review – Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum tour, Sat 9 July**

By Tara King, undergraduate student, University of St Andrews

In early July members were taken on a tour of Stirling Smith Art Gallery and Museum led by the institution’s director, Dr Elspeth King. The tour began with an introduction to the history of the institution itself, founded in 1874 from a bequest by local artist Thomas Stuart Smith (1815-1869). Members were told that it is the only municipal gallery founded by a practicing artist.
The tour’s highlights included works by Thomas Stuart Smith himself, notably 1869’s *Pipe of Freedom*. This painting shows a pipe smoking black man standing in front of a poster announcing a sale of slaves, with a copy of Abraham Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation pasted over it. Unusual at the time for having a black man as the subject of the painting rather than as a background figure, the painting was rejected by the Royal Academy and shown instead as part of a *salon des refusés*.

Dr King then led members through the 20th Century Art in the Smith Collections exhibition, informing members that Stirling Smith inherited 30 works of art from the Scottish Arts Council Collection Bequest of 1998. The most immediately striking of those on display were John Bellany’s 1969 work *The Gates of Death* and William Gear’s *Interior*, 1949.

The site functions as a repository for objects of local history. The world’s oldest football, discovered during excavations at Stirling Castle, is on display at Stirling Smith as are a selection of the 22 William Wallace pictures that the Smith has in its collection. Local artists and local subjects are also well represented within the collection: Stirling-born John Munnoch’s (1879–1915) paintings *The Chinese Coat*, 1910 with its echoes of Whistler, and *Jessie MacGregor*, 1913, the subject of which has only recently been identified by Dr King, are both on display as part of the 20th century art exhibition.

Nellie Ellen Harvey (1865–1949), niece of Sir George Harvey, P.R.S.A. (1806–1876), was an accomplished local artist and is represented by a landscape oil painting and animal art in the form of a watercolour and painted ceramic tile. Nellie gifted Stirling Smith a number of her uncle’s works, amongst them Sir George Harvey’s *The Lost Child Restored*, 1829 which is displayed next to a collection of his preparatory oil sketches on paper.

In 1990 the Smith acquired Sir Joshua Reynolds’ 1772 portrait *Mrs Callendar of Craigforth*. Harriet Dutens posed for Reynolds shortly after her marriage to local man James Callendar of Craigforth and Ardkinglass. More recent acquisitions to the Smith’s collection include Scottish artist Jane Gardiner’s portrait of Stirling Smith’s feline in residence, Oswald Clinghan-Smith, as well as the maquette for Kenny Hunter’s forthcoming sculpture *Guardians of Scotland*, the monument of William Wallace and his co-commander Andrew de Moray to mark the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

It was a fascinating tour of a gallery and museum. Thank you to Dr King for hosting the visit.

**Feature articles**

**Hornel’s Photographic Eye and the Influence of Japanese Photography**

By Dr Antonia Laurence-Allen, Curator, National Trust for Scotland and Helen Whiting, Research Student at University of Dundee

![Bessie MacNicol, E.A. Hornel, 1896](image)

Writing on Edward Atkinson Hornel (1864-1933) has largely focused on how his rise to fame and profitability stemmed from his use of Japonisme; a ‘western’ take on Japanese art and culture.
Building on this work, this article argues that it was Japanese photography, encountered on a trip to Japan in 1893, rather than Japonisme itself that provided Hornel with a new way of looking.

Artistic influences: Japonisme and the camera

Japanese art was greatly admired by European artists in the mid/late 1800s and its influence can be seen in the works of painters like James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), Édouard Manet (1832-1883) and Mary Cassatt (1844-1926). By 1872, the European art market was claiming the birth of a new style, ‘Japonisme’, adopted enthusiastically by avant garde artists who were seeking a new language for painting. Hornel emerged from art school into this atmosphere and became actively involved in the avant-garde art scene in Glasgow. Japonisme paintings were being brought to the city as well as exhibitions of costume and ‘curios’, all designed to pique the public’s imagination.

Hornel was therefore not alone in his desire to explore and use the ‘exotic’ qualities of this newly ‘discovered’ culture. He and his friend and fellow artist George Henry (1858-1943) set off for Japan in 1893, stating his ‘desire to see and study the environment...to become personally in touch with the people, to live their life, and discover the source of their inspiration.’ Whether Hornel did indeed experience Japan this way is questionable, but what he did bring home was a greater understanding of how to use the camera.

Hornel had definitely been taking photographs before he went to Japan. For example, there is a glass plate negative that captures a young girl with hob-nailed boots, sitting on the grass grinning wildly. She is the same figure seen in Hornel’s 1891 painting Summer. Hornel was also aware that other fellow painters in Scotland, like John Lavery, A.E. Taylor and James Paterson were also using photographs to aid their work. In setting the scene, we can therefore appreciate that Hornel was a painter happy to utilise the camera. What is more interesting is what he learned from his engagement with the visual aesthetic of Japanese photographers.

A changing Japan

Japan had been a closed book to most Europeans, but this was changing by the time of Hornel’s visit. In 1868, a political revolution had occurred, which brought about the demise of the military government and the return of imperial rule. The Emperor took the name Meiji, meaning ‘enlightened rule’, and a shift began from a feudal society towards a more westernised government. The changes included hiring foreigners from specialist fields, such as engineering and telecommunications, to lead infrastructure projects and train a new generation of Japanese students in modern technology, as well as sending Japanese citizens to Western Europe and America to learn the latest innovations.

Key figures in our story on photography embarked on this program of exchange. William Burton (1856-1899) was hired as a civil engineer for the Imperial University in the late 1880s. Burton was also a keen photographer and met Ogawa Kazumasa (1860-1929), a professional photographer and pioneering printer who had undertaken a two-year apprenticeship in Boston learning skills like dry plate developing and collotype printing. Burton and Kazumasa were founding members of the Japanese Photographic Society (JPS) and close colleagues. In 1891 an exhibition of Kazumasa’s photographs helped launch the opening of Japan’s first skyscraper, the Ryounkaku, which had been designed by Burton.
The display was a publicity stunt that also helped raise Kazumasa’s profile as a photographer. Entitled *100 Beauties*, the exhibition contained a collection of studied portraits of Tokyo’s geisha girls. Visitors were asked to climb the tower and vote for the most beautiful woman.

**Japanese photography**

The first photographs of Japan were taken in the 1850s. As a rapidly developing technology, the camera was very much part of the modern world and Japanese photographers recorded infrastructure projects, building works and contemporary life (including the Emperor depicted in modern dress). Concurrently, studios started catering to western markets and fed audiences with the well-established image of Japan as ‘a land of quaintly beautiful women and flowers and fans and sunshades’.

The above c.1890 print by an unknown commercial photographer is an example of the kind of composition that sold well. Known locally as shashin and highly valued for their colours, detail and design, these photographs focused on Japanese tradition, costume and feudal customs. In this image, a woman is photographed in front of a generic studio backdrop. She wears a patterned kimono. Her arms, raised above her head, hold a traditional Japanese hat (kasa). This gesture provides an excellent view of the wide sleeves of the kimono and a glimpse of the obi knot at her back. Her pose, head tilted forward and body twisted to be viewed three-quarters side on with knees slightly bent, creates a perfect 'S' bend. This is echoed in the shape created by her left forearm and sleeve and is partially repeated by the ribbon of the kasa. It is a deceptively complex construction of shapes and reflects the asymmetrical and vertical aspect of the compositions found in most of the shashin in Hornel’s collection.

Kōzaburō Tamamura, shashin print showing Storks at Okayama Park, c. 1890
Hornel and the Japanese Photographic Society

Many commercial photographers were members of the JPS - Japan's first photo society. In its founding year (1889) the JPS had 56 members, including Burton and Kazumasa. Nearly half of the memberships (24) were foreigners and the organisation became a vital social centre for tourists. Hornel and Henry both became members in 1893. The JPS helped outsiders meet local people and gain access to theatres, exhibitions and modelling sessions. Members went to local theatres and tea-houses to watch dancers perform. They were also given the chance to capture women in traditional costume posing in the privacy of a studio setting. Hornel had taken advantage of the activities and modelling sessions organised by the JPS; even buying a local photograph of Tokyo's main Kabuki theatre as a memento.

In the collection at Broughton House (Hornel's Kirkcudbright home) there are a number of glass plate negatives of Japanese girls and women, all focusing on specific actions and expressions. He was fascinated by the gestures and movement of Japanese dance, which, he said was ‘made up of quaint posturing, dignified and refined movements, with delicate and artistic and pretty manipulations of the fan’. As a westerner, Hornel valued Japanese culture from his own domestic lens. This colonial attitude has been explored in detail by scholars and is not the direct focus of this article. Instead, we focus on what forms Hornel sees; namely, the unique postures, gestures and movements of the hands, head and body.

Hornel’s Japanese photography

Hornel revisited Japan in 1920 and the Broughton House collection contains three sets of images gathered on both these trips. First, he purchased a large quantity of shashin showing women, interiors and landscape scenes. The shashin gave Hornel a set of static, formulaic poses, depicting women and girls tending a tea ceremony or standing in a Japanese garden. Many of these were taken by JPS members known to Hornel (including Kazumasa and Kōzaburō Tamamura) and removed the obedient and submissive ‘ideal’ Japanese woman from modern life, placing in a fantasy world created by western exoticism.

Unknown commercial photographer, shashin print showing flower arrangement, c. 1890

Unknown photographer, shashin print of tea ceremony, c. 1890

Both Kasumasa and Tamamura fed the market with images reinforcing the stereotype of Japan as a land of cherry blossom and geishas. Many of these images have been jabbed through with a pin or splashed with paint as Hornel presumably used them for reference while he painted in his studio.
The second type of image in Hornel's Japanese collection is the result of studio modelling sessions organised by the JPS. These are attributed to Hornel but may have been taken by another photographer as he was sent images of two Japanese women in 1920. The glass plate negatives capture women and girls posing informally in a basic studio setting with the ubiquitous and highly incongruous matting and backdrop. Their bodies are more languid than the static figures in the hand-coloured shashin. In what seems like an effort to extend the traditional poses found in commercial photography, these studio photographs provide the expression and dynamism Hornel had been captivated by when he attended the dance halls and theatres.

Attributed to Hornel, two Japanese girls in a studio

These are similar to the third set of images, which capture women in informal poses but are highly structured. Groups of girls laugh with one another and single women engage with the camera in a confident manner. They are posed with an
ease that is not evident in the formal shashin and are more sophisticated than those attributed to Hornel. It is not known if these were taken by JPS members for private use or whether they were available commercially. It is evident that the entire collection had a profound effect on Hornel’s paintings.

The lasting effects

After his return to Scotland in 1894, Hornel honed an approach to painting that always seemed to begin with a photographic image. After his first exhibition of Japanese paintings was sensationally successful he developed a method of manufacturing works that would sell. All his subsequent paintings focused on the twists and turns of the female form. The hands, feet and bodies all reflect the studied poses seen in the Japanese prints he collected. And, all the figures are enshrined in scenes of dreamy colour and light; an imaginary rural setting unreflective of modern realities.
Hornel purchased Broughton House in Kirkcudbright in 1901, which had a large studio adjoined to the back. This is where he started using photography to capture the choreographed poses he would transfer into paint. His eldest sister Tizzy became his housekeeper. Local girls, chaperoned by the mothers and guided in the studio by Tizzy, began posing for Hornel’s camera. A friend, Robert McConchie, helped with the photography and Hornel directed the girls to move and stand in particular ways; ways that reflect the specific poses of the Japanese dancers.

At this point, Hornel becomes a compositor, taking a hand from one photograph, a tilt of the head from another, then applying a broad hard outline and detailed attention to skin tone on the faces of the figures in his paintings. It is not the identity of an individual he seeks to interpret but the ideal surface of the female form; a purely objective exercise to find the ‘ideal’ pose. The girls are then surrounded by an increasingly frenzied thick impasto, suggesting a setting, perhaps a tree, a bay or a flowering shrub.
In the first two decades of the 1900s, Hornel was to create over 1,600 glass plates. The largest selection is of local girls, but there are also a number of photographs from Hornel and Tizzy’s 1907 trip to Ceylon and 1920 visit to Burma. They all echo the tropes he had discovered in the Japanese commercial photographs.

Photography is inherently paradoxical, as it is a modern technology used to capture the essence of the past. In Japan, many photographs were taken to record the country’s period of change, but the vast majority of photographic prints focused on ancient feudal customs, ‘exotic’ habits and traditional costumes, as these were popular with nostalgic, curious, western tourists. Japanese photographers were feeding this market, milking the audiences of their fetish for feudal and female idealism. Hornel was hoping to find a pre-industrial idyll in Japan, as he himself said: ‘a paradise of babies and pretty girls, a land of cherry blossom and seductive tea house life’. However, he was disappointed with the contemporary country he encountered in 1893. Ironically, it was the modern technology of photography that gave him the ideal world he longed to witness, and to paint.

All images © National Trust for Scotland, Broughton House and Garden

Alphonse Mucha: Aspirations of Beauty and Unity
By Pippa Stephenson, Curator of European Art, Glasgow Museums

Alphonse Mucha (1860-1939): for many, the name will conjure up images of elegant bohemian women with impossibly long hair, advertising cigarettes, biscuits, bicycles and liquor. From a certain angle, he can certainly be regarded as a graphic artist with a strong and precocious concept of branding. Yet, beyond these striking images is an artistry founded on strong draughtsmanship, commitment to his beloved Czech homeland, and the admirable aspiration of beauty for all.

Mucha was born 1860 in Ivančice, a small town half an hour from Brno, in the Moravian region of today’s Czech Republic. His father was an usher, and his mother a governess. Alphonse was a brother to four sisters, including two half-sisters from his father’s previous marriage. The Austro-Hungarian rule under which Mucha was born played a huge influence upon his life and work. After being nearly wiped out as a result of Habsburg rule, in the 1800s the Czech language experienced a revival thanks to figures such as Josef Jungmann and Josef Dobrovský. Traditional Czech culture became a focus for preservation, celebration and, ultimately, a resurgence with which Mucha became inextricably linked.

After being expelled from school, paid for by the choral scholarship he had won, Mucha resolved to become an artist aged seventeen. There followed a short-lived stint as a theatre set painter in Vienna, work as a portrait painter back home in Moravia, and enrolment as a student of formal art school training in Munich and Paris, thanks to financial support from count Karl Khuen-Belasi, a wealthy local landowner. The artist moved to Paris in 1887 and, funded by the count, studied at the Académies Julian and Colarossi. When this funding ran out, two years later, Mucha worked as an illustrator for French and Czech publications. It was around this time that Mucha met Madame Charlotte Caron (1849-1925), the owner of a small crèmerie at 13, rue de la Grande Chaumiére. Abandoned by her husband, Madame Caron supported local artists including August Strindberg.
(with whom she allegedly had an infatuation), the Polish painter Władysław Ślewiński, and Paul Gauguin, allowing them to occasionally eat there on credit, or in exchange for paintings which adorned the walls of her café. For a short while, Mucha lived in a flat above the crèmerie. In 1893, a couple of years after their first meeting, Gauguin and Mucha shared a studio nearby. Photographs reveal a fascinating friendship, including a trouserless Gauguin sat at a harmonium in Mucha’s studio. It is easy to understand Gauguin’s interest in the Czech artist, who is often photographed dressed in traditional folk costume.

It was being at the right place and at the right time that helped Mucha secure his place in history. In the early 1890s, the artist received occasional work as an illustrator for magazines and school textbooks. He also ran drawing courses at the Académie Colorossi, and from 1898 at James McNeill Whistler’s Académie Carmen. One of the magazines he worked for, *Le Costume au Théâtre et à la Ville*, was printed by the French company Lemercier. On Boxing Day, 1894, Mucha was doing a favour for his friend Kadar, proofing prints at the Lemercier studio. While he was working, the Théâtre de la Renaissance called, urgently requesting a poster for Sarah Bernhardt’s new production of Sardou’s *Gismonda*, which was to open less than two weeks later. Given the holiday season, none of Lemercier’s usual poster designers were available, and so Mucha was asked if he’d try his hand, despite having no prior experience designing posters. Poster design, prompted by the industrial revolution and the subsequent possibility of mass, large-scale reproductions, had exploded in Paris in the 1890s. Jules Chéret, known as the father of the modern poster, helped to give prominence to bountiful images of women, used to advertise theatre, cabaret and opera, as well as products such as perfume, soap and liquor. Toulouse-Lautrec followed suit in 1891 producing his first poster for the Moulin Rouge. These posters showed Parisian performers such as Jane Avril and ‘la Goulue’ (The Glutton) waving their skirts flirtatiously and dancing voraciously across the stage. The posters were brightly coloured, with text an integral part of the design. Mucha’s poster designs challenged those of Chéret and Toulouse-Lautrec in both size and style. Firstly, the format was radically different: Mucha’s original *Gismonda* was 218 centimetres tall and 76 centimetres wide, while advertising posters of the time were typically around 130 centimetres tall and 90 centimetres wide. In order to fit his design onto one lithograph stone, Mucha divided his design in half, so that the two halves sat side by side during printing, later assembled into one, tall design. This elongated, elegant ratio instantly distinguished Mucha’s posters from that of his fellow poster designers, giving his full-length figures a near life-size presence. Secondly, the colours that Mucha used moved away from the clashing, gaudy colours of Chéret and Toulouse-Lautrec. He employed soft pastel blue, peach pink and leafy green, outlined boldly in black. The posters became so popular that they were ripped from hoardings before the glue dried, or sliced off with razors.

When Mucha designed *Gismonda*, Sarah had just turned 50. Yet, the soft, pale face on the poster, with her long, red hair and youthful figure does not betray anything of the actress’ milestone age. Mucha showed Sarah as the character she aspired to be on stage: strong, majestic, intoxicatingly beautiful, and with a saintly, Madonna-like appeal. Mucha admired Sarah’s ability to penetrate the psyche of each character that she played, and the subsequent posters that Mucha designed for Sarah’s theatrical roles, following a six-year contract with the actress, each present Sarah in her idealised stage presence. Not only did the artist create theatrical posters for the actress during this time, but he also developed costumes and set design for her productions. As a result of this union, the insight and in-depth knowledge of Sarah and the Théâtre de la Renaissance that he built up over the years allowed Mucha to present her in a way that was sympathetic to both the character, and the overall production: from the contemplative, tormented male figure of *Lorenzaccio*, to the ephemeral, dream-like *Dame aux Camelias*.

Mucha’s success with Sarah led to a huge demand for the artist’s designs. In 1896, he signed an exclusive contract with the Parisian company F.
Champenois. Before long, he was designing posters and packaging for cigarettes, perfumes, bikes, biscuits, railway holidays and more. Mucha’s designs for these products are often characterised by a ‘Q’ formula, where a long-haired woman is positioned in front of a circle, their limbs and flowing dresses forming the line in a letter Q.

Mucha put the 19th century ideal of ‘art for the people’ to good practice when he designed several series of decorative panels from 1896. These panels, which were produced by Champenois, featured his distinctive designs, but without advertising messages. Mucha intended for these works to be accessible, affordable artworks for the masses, allowing a wider public to experience beauty, believing in ‘art for the people, and not for private drawing rooms.’

Behind Mucha’s designs is a strong, accomplished draughtsmanship. These skills are showcased beautifully in his 1902, 72-plate book, *Document Decoratifs*. In this large volume, a handbook for craftspeople and manufacturers, delicate studies of women sit alongside brightly-coloured wallpaper patterns, designs for ornate furniture, jewellery, dishes and cutlery. Together, this volume creates a pattern for a whole lifestyle, designed to infuse people’s everyday lives with beauty from every angle.

Another surprising element to Mucha’s output is his photography. The artist used a borrowed camera in the 1880s when living in Vienna, snapping street scenes. It wasn’t until he moved to Paris and started to enjoy some success, that he could afford his own camera. Many of his photographs were taken in his sumptuous studio on the rue du Val-de-Grâce. This studio, where he worked from 1896, was a bohemian paradise filled to the rafters with patterned carpets, chandeliers, Japanese wall hangings, medieval crucifixes, bear skins, and tall, spindly plants. There he snapped models, usually female, both nude and dressed in traditional Slavic costume. These models often assumed dramatic and difficult poses, contorting their bodies for the camera, or staring out intensely. These photographs were not usually taken with specific projects in mind, but formed a kind of repository of images from where the artist could seek inspiration for future paintings and designs. They offer a fascinating glimpse into Mucha’s world and the way he worked.

Through his career, Mucha integrated Slavic elements into his designs, including women wearing traditional folk dress, motifs depicting flowers and fruit, and decorative byzantine religious imagery. The artist’s greatest passion was his homeland, and the international success he achieved through his product and theatre advertisements allowed him the artistic freedom to accept projects directly supporting the Czech region and its struggle for independence. In 1910, the artist returned to Moravia and began the *Slav Epic*, a highly ambitious cycle of twenty paintings, the largest six by eight metres, depicting Czech and Slav history. In 1918, the Czech Republic was formed and ten years later Mucha presented his *Slav Epic* to the new republic, seventeen years after he began this immense project.

Mucha’s untiring support of Czech nationalism came at a time of a Europe-wide resurgence of interest in ancient history, folklore and traditions. The artist’s oeuvre is examined from a wider British context in the upcoming exhibition, *Alphonse Mucha: In Quest of Beauty*, at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow. Works by artists including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Duncan and E.A. Hornel, along with Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Jessie M. King highlight the
intriguing artistic interchange between Mucha and artists working across the waters.

Mucha’s achievements are multi-faceted; he was an artist with an immense talent for producing distinctive, successful advertising images. However, these seductive images should not distort our view of Mucha as a skilled draughtsman and proud Czech artist with a central, valiant aim: to promote beauty for all.

*Alphonse Mucha: In Quest of Beauty* runs from 8 October 2016 to 19 February 2017 at Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. Entrance is £5 (full price), £3 (concession).

**Exhibitions**

*William Gillies & John Maxwell*

City Art Centre, Edinburgh

30 July – 23 October 2016

Admission Free

William Gillies (1898-1973) and John Maxwell (1905-1962) were among the most significant and distinctive Scottish artists of the 20th century. Gillies is best known for his rolling Borders landscapes, open-air watercolours and carefully constructed still life compositions. Maxwell, on the other hand, is remembered for his expressive, dream-like depictions of creatures, flowers and timeless nudes; images that combine the poetic beauty of nature with the magic of the imagination. The two artists pursued differing approaches in their work, and had contrasting personalities, but they remained life-long friends.

This year the City Art Centre is celebrating that friendship with *William Gillies & John Maxwell*, a major exhibition that traces the careers of the two artists. The exhibition explores their parallel development over the course of five decades. Starting with the shared experience of training at Edinburgh College of Art in the 1920s, it follows their progress as they absorbed and reinterpreted the influences of European modernism and gradually found their own unique creative paths.

The exhibition features over 70 paintings, drawings and archival objects, selected from the holdings of the City Art Centre, Royal Scottish Academy, University of Edinburgh and several private collections. Among the highlights are rare early works by both artists, and their individual submissions to the 1951 Festival of Britain display *Sixty Paintings for ’51* – an event that cemented their reputations on a UK-wide scale.

At the heart of the exhibition is the Fletcher Collection, a group of 43 artworks that has been on long-term loan to the City Art Centre since 1995. The Collection was assembled by the botanist Dr Harold Fletcher and his wife Betty, who began acquiring work by Gillies and Maxwell in the 1940s and went on to become key patrons and personal friends of the artists. This is the first time in over 20 years that the Fletcher Collection has been shown together in its entirety.

*William Gillies & John Maxwell* runs until 23 October 2016. The opening hours at this venue are Mon–Sat from 10am to 5pm, and Sunday 12 noon to 5pm. For further information, including details about spotlight tour times, please visit: [http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/Venues/City-Art-Centre/Exhibitions/2016-17/William-Gillies--John-Maxwell](http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/Venues/City-Art-Centre/Exhibitions/2016-17/William-Gillies--John-Maxwell)
Henry Taylor Wyse: Artist, Teacher, Craftsman
The Hill House, Helensburgh
1 July – 31 October 2016

An exhibition of paintings, prints and ceramics by an important member of Scotland’s Arts and Crafts movement. The Hill House is currently displaying the work of Henry Taylor Wyse (1870-1951). Drawn principally from the family’s collections, this exhibition celebrates three aspects of his long career – as an artist, as a progressive art master, and as a fine designer-craftsman. The site is open every day from 11:30 to 17:00.

A Wise Man Knows His Craft - Henry Taylor Wyse and the Holyrood Pottery
The Museum of Edinburgh at Huntly House
8 July – 29 October 2016

An exhibition about Henry Taylor Wyse with items from family collections telling the story of pottery. This exhibition and the current Hill House displays draw on the extensive collections of the Wyse estate, and feature archives, paintings and pots never before shown in public. Between them, apart from many artworks by Wyse himself, they feature paintings and other works from Wyse’s circle, including painters David Alison and John Munnoch, ceramic designer Emma Gillies and sculptor, Phyllis Bone.

A fully illustrated book Henry Taylor Wyse: Artist, Teacher, Craftsman has been specially written to coincide with the two exhibitions by Elizabeth Cumming, historian and curator of Scottish art and design, and Heather Jack, ceramics historian, and a recent President of the Scottish Pottery Society. It is available from the shop at the Hill House in Helensburgh, the shop at the Museum of Edinburgh, and online from the publishers, Aberbrothock Imprints.

PrintRoomDundee
Tower Foyer Gallery, Tower Building, University of Dundee
3 September – 29 October 2016

This exhibition presents work by a new Dundee-based print group, PrintRoomDundee, and is the first they have staged in their home city.

PrintRoomDundee brings together both well-established and emerging artists, many of whom are graduates from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art & Design. All of the group’s printmakers use the facilities of the DCA Print Studio, the successor to the original Dundee Printmakers Workshop founded in 1977.

The exhibition shows a wide variety of styles, themes and printmaking techniques, and includes work by Allan Beveridge, Lara Scouller, John Johnstone, Liz Myhill, Bill Taylor, Christine Goodman, Reinhard Behrens, Jean Duncan and many others. You can find out more about the members of PrintRoomDundee and see examples of their work at www.printroomdundee.scot. The opening dates and times for this exhibition are: Mon-Fri 09:30-19:00 and Sat 13:00-17:00.
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