



Sept. 11, 1995, using the Natl. EGA Hdqtrs. library loan of slides purchased in 1980 by Jacqueline Jacobs, the San Francisco EGA Chapter presents THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

EMBROIDERY 1894-1920. The following handout prepared by SF EGA Education

Chrm. Christine M. Anderson may be helpful to those who wish further exposure to these unique works.

She was prompted in Jan. 1981 to write to Scotland for the original 48-page 1980 exhibition catalogue because of the 3-page article by Kathleen Whyte appearing in Great Britain's *Embroidery* magazine Vol. 31 No.4 (Winter 1980 issue). Christine's attraction to the needleworks of this period arose from the romantic style: elliptical curves within curves, use of a favorite lettering style ("Desdemona" is the modern transfer type modern equivalent & "Lalique" corresponds in computer fonts) and that the embroideries were often credited to one of 3 names which made them further recognizable. She also appreciated that these were surface embroideries made with lustrous satin stitches, drawn thread work and needleweaving. The exhibition slides show us vividly how brightly colored some of the silk panels are as well as the some subdued colors that were known to predominate: mauve, green, white, brown & grayish pinks, sometimes criticized as "Art" shades (slide 35 a 59"x35" wide banner by Newbery).

Decorative art embroidery flourished in Glasgow 100 years ago at the same time French and Belgian *Art Nouveau* was popularized. Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh evolved strongly vertical, linear designs to support stylized flowers, interlaced in intricate patterns. His wife, MARGARET MACDONALD, (1866-1933),

was an artist and embroiderer of this distinctive style upon commissioned pieces (incl. silk applique lamp shade pictured p.78 The Glasgow Style by Gerald & Celia Lerner, p.177 and other panels after their marriage in 1900) and clothing so distinctive of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic movement (embroid, loose clothing compared to restrictive Victorian fashions). She had been an admirer of William

Morris, known for the English Arts & Crafts Movement. Her friend, JESSIE ROWAT NEWBERY, (1864-1948) daughter of a Paisley shawl mfg., was also known for clothing embroidery, having collected peasant embroideries from the Balkans during travels with her parents. After being a student at the Glasgow School of Art, married the 35-yr. old headmaster in 1889 & became a teacher of embroidery there from 1894 to her retirement in 1908 (about the time when popular tastes changed to Vienna Secession design principles). Her embroideries are recognizable in the introduction of applique of simple shapes with designs based on lettering & needleweaving using silk

threads or crewel wools (incl. p.171-2 Lerner book). Her student, ANN MACBETH, (1875-1948), became an inspiring teacher herself, producing large & small figures in stitched hangings, ecclesiastical commissions and prolific embroidered household linens, banners, book covers & clothing (i.e. p.142 Lerner book shows "The Sleeping Beauty" 19"x42" embroidered panel, is EGA slide 21 and is nicely enlarged in Winter 1980 *Embroidery*). At the school, 1894-1920, students had to pass a preparatory course, meeting competency in Drawing, Still Life, Painting & Modeling before entering the design room. Embroidery was part of the advanced course, where students worked out programs of various subjects, such as a mantelpiece border or firescreen (EGA slides 6, 19, 29), embroidered in colors of their own choice. Hessian, unbleached calico, linen and flannel were used in the classes, embroidered in both crewel wools and silk threads; Macbeth's eager experiments have faded & somewhat even disintegrated over 100 years. The technical art studies provided for needlework. The Scottish Educ. Dept. granted the first certificate for Art Needlework and Embroidery in 1907 upon completion of the 2-year course which enabled a professional qualification for the School Diploma in Applied Design to students & outsiders paying a fee by the term or session. "Glasgow Roses" (simple circles with satin stitch lines indicating folded petals) recur frequently in this period, along with techniques of applique edged with satin stitch, chain-stitched flowers, drawn thread work combined with surface embroidery. Frameworks of right-angled branches, with or w/o seeds in more or less geometric abstraction are another common

feature. Flattened perspective for Glasgow landscapes also appear. Audrey Beardsley was a major source of inspiration for the Glasgow artists who wanted their Scottish style to be different from either the Art & Craft or Art Nouveau Movement. Aside from the EGA script to be read for 26 of the original 127 exhibits shown at The Glasgow Museum in 1980, this

bibliography. In addition to the original catalogue that details the measurements of each piece will let you see some of these needleart pieces again:

Billcliffe, Roger Charles Rennie Mackintosh, The Complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings & Interior Designs, Taplinger Publ., NY 1979 252 pages Howard, Constance Twentieth Century Embroidery in Great Britain to 1939, Batsford, London 1981 192 pages Lerner, Gerald & Celia The Glasgow Style, Taplinger Publ., NY 1979 180 pages

March 1983 House & Garden p. 140-156 "Mackintosh Prophet of Pure Perfection" has an embroidered bed canopy & portraits of Margaret MacDonald in pre-Raphaelite headress. Winter 1973, Spring 74, Winter 80, Summer 90 Embroidery Swain, Margaret Historical Needlework, London 1970 & Scottish Embroidery, London 1990

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Billcliffe, Roger, (1979) Charles Rennie Macintosh. The complete Furniture, Furniture Drawings & Interior Designs, NY: Taplinger Publ.

Embroidery (Winter 1973, Spring 74, Winter 80, Summer 90) (THESE REFERENCES NEED BETTER DOCUMENTATION)

House and Garden, (March 1983) "Macintosh Prophet of Pure Perfection" has an emb'd bed canopy & portraits of Margaret MacDonald in pre-Raphaelite headdress. p.140-156.

Howard, Constance, (1981) Twentieth Century Embroidery in Great Britain to 1939, London: Batsford.

Larner, Gerald and Celia, (1979) The Glasgow Style, NY: Taplinger Publishers.

Swain, Margaret, (1970) Historical Needlework, London (PUBLISHER IS MISSING) + NY: Scribner's

Swain, Margaret, (1990) Scottish Embroidery, London (PUBLISHER IS MISSING)