

Hill House, Helensburgh

Acquisition and endowment of Hill House, Helensburgh, designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh. The finest of his domestic creations, The Hill House sits high above the Clyde, commanding fine views over the river estuary. Walter Blackie, director of the well-known Glasgow publishers, commissioned not only the house and garden but much of the furniture and all the interior fittings and decorative schemes. Mackintosh's wife, Margaret MacDonald, contributed fabric designs and a unique gesso overmantel. The overall effect is daring, but restrained in its elegance: the result, timeless rooms, as modern today as they must have been in 1904 when the Blackie family moved in. An information room interprets the special relationship between architect and patron and provides a historical context for inspirations, a dazzling exhibition in the upper east wing and the gardens. It brings together exceptional pieces of domestic design by great living designers, all of whom, in some way, pay homage to Mackintosh's elegance and invention. Inspiring comparisons may be drawn between the work of Mackintosh, now recognised as one of the geniuses of the early 20th Century, and pieces that themselves have become 21st -century icons. The gardens have been restored to their former glory, and reflect features common to Mackintosh's architectural designs. They also contain a kinetic sculpture given to the house by the artist George Rickey.

Nation/region

Scotland

Grant awarded

£424,850

Award date

15/10/1981